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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

NEIGHBOURS' MATT WILSON »

MORE THAN JUST THE BOY NEXT DOOR. PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTIAN SCOTT

LET'S GO TO...

* NEW ORLEANS
* 5-STAR BALI
* SITGES PRIDE
* AND BACK IN TIME TO FIRE ISLAND

SAM SMITH TROYE SIVAN ADAM LAMBERT

HOW THEY ROCKED THE MUSIC WORLD!

#192

» DANIEL GAROFALI

LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE!

MAD BROMANCE

THE TOPSY-TURVY WORLD OF THE GAY/STRAIGHT DATE

"THE IMPUREST HAPPINESS I HAVE EVER KNOWN"

THE LIFE OF DENHAM FOUTS

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Daniel Garofali by James Demitri, starts page 96.

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It was a year of monumental victories and heartbreaking injustices for the GLBTI world. Look back on the people and events that shaped our busy year.

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Pop-star gays locking lips on stage, a love song to James Bond and a music video in a sauna. It's 2015 in gay music!

54 EVERYBODY NEEDS GOOD NEIGHBOURS
Matt Wilson burst onto TV screens this year as gay stripper Aaron Brennan on Aussie soap, Neighbours. While shooting this month's cover, he talks kissing, modelling, and going from tradie to exotic dancer!

92 "THE IMPUREST HAPPINESS I'VE KNOWN"
He inspired great literature and instant erections in some of the most prestigious men of wealth, arts and letters. Yes, Denham Fouts was more than just your everyday prostitute.

Matt wears aussieBum swimwear.

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A Year In The Life Of DNA

Serious stories, and seriously sexy cover boys.

DNA'S 2015 STARTED with fashion designer Brent Wilson on the January cover. I was already a fan of his menswear, but had no idea that beneath those immaculate suits he was hiding a DNA-hot body. With his perfect v-shaped torso, Brent looked great in every pair of underwear we threw at him – and the stunning nude shots as well.

Our lead feature that month was *Australian Horror Story: Asylum* by Jesse Archer. Little has change for the gay men trapped in Australia's refugee detention centre hellholes, since then.

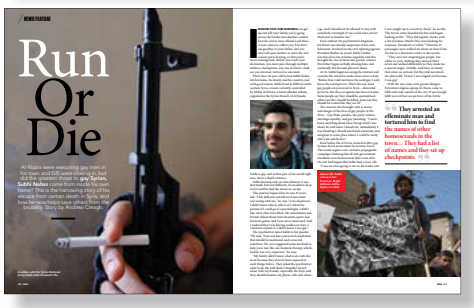
In February, Chris Glebatsas, half of the duo behind LQD Skincare, rocked the cover. Chris and his partner Anthony are the brains, brawn and public faces of their business. "In the past it was enough to be a nice guy," said Chris. "Now everyone wants a nice guy *with abs*."

I discussed the increasing acceptance of trans people in modern society – and this was before Caitlyn Jenner; while Francis Mossman wrote about the use and misuse of steroids in the gay community.

Our lead feature in March, *My Parents Want Me Dead*, told the story of a young gay Turkish student hiding in London, whose hardcore religious parents literally want to kill him. In *Willing And Able* we celebrated the lives of gay people living, and excelling, with disabilities.

In April, Australian rugby star Kayne Lawton was one of the sexiest covers of the year, I think. "Meet the real me," he said, flirting shamelessly. Frances Mosman encouraged everyone to look their best with his *Great Eight* gym workouts, and the *Fit At Any Age* feature did the same. Meanwhile, our *Code Of Silence* feature wondered why we still haven't seen an out, gay AFL player, and when that might happen.

Furry-chested Pablo Hernandez brought his sultry self to the May cover. *PrEP-are For A Change* discussed the rise of Truvada but



suggested that PrEP might be complicating the safe-sex message. I spoke to Steven Oliver, Indigenous comedy star of *Black Comedy*, and found him charming and hilarious.

Big Brother housemate Leo Ryan Burke was our June cover star (a second cover for him) and it was our travel issue spanning the Arctic Circle, to Sweden, Madrid, Morocco, Colombia, Queenstown and India. We wrote about the *RuPaul's Drag Race* phenomenon and I went off to see Shangela, Alyssa and Laganja on their Australian tour.

Francis Mossman is not just a contributing writer to DNA, he also plays Stevie in the web series *The Horizon*. When Stevie developed a crystal meth addiction on the show, Francis set to work researching the facts, and this became the basis for his lead feature in July.

Meanwhile, Miami hunk Omar Betancourt was on the cover, I went to South Africa for the Mr Gay World finals, New Zealand rower Robbie Manson came out and I misspelled his name on the cover!

Following the popularity of the Your DNA issue the year before, we invited DNA readers to submit their stories, artwork, photography and journalism to the 2015 Your DNA issue. Again, we were thrilled with your diversity and creativity – everything from minimalist poetry to an op-ed on gay aged care, and some very hot photography. We first met creative writer Joshua Maddox Wellington in this issue and his hilarious almost-true works of fiction have been featured in several issues of DNA since. My editorial was on how the straights have appropriated anal sex from the gays, and it was Gay Ski Week time in Queenstown.

Our annual Sexiest Men Alive issue was as big as ever in September and we loved the Australian film *Holding The Man*, and the UK's Ben Wishaw in *Lilting*. Yet another straight footy player who loves us, Daniel Conn, was featured, and Courtney Act dished on RuPaul.

Personal trainer Lochi Horner "made us hot" on the cover in October, I interviewed Josh Thomas for the new season of *Please Like Me* (which I loved), we profiled peptides, and I decided it was time for Australia's then-Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, to go! By the time the issue hit the stands his party agreed and we had a new Prime Minister.

LA model Jeffrey Szpylman and his gorgeous tsunami of chestnut hair graced the cover in November and Beverly Hills "housewife" Lisa Vanderpump talked brass tacks about homophobia inside. Entertainment writer Marc Andrews interviewed the adorable Troye Sivan, and we revealed Make Me Hot finalists Eli and Chris.

Online heartthrob, Quinton Wynn, was our cover guy in December, and I interviewed refugee advocate Subhi Nahas, who'd escaped the Syrian death squads.

2015 was full of incredible milestones (see our full wrap-up from page 44). Thanks for being there with us, and Happy New Year!

Andrew Creagh (Founding Editor)
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SUMMER '16

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INSIDE THE MINDS OF DNA READERS! EMAILS, LETTERS, TWEETS, FACEBOOK POSTS, CARRIER PIGEON DISPATCHES AND RAMBLINGS

Send your feedback to burnttoast@DNAmagazine.com.au Or post your burnttoast letters on our website. Go to DNAmagazine.com.au. Letters will be edited for length, clarity and hilarity!

JEFFREY SZPYLMAN AT THE PUMP
Yay. I always love the day DNA comes out – *William Jay*
Wheeeeeeeeeew! It's HOT in here y'all – *Rodney Church*
Gorgeous. – *Rien Denbrok*
Hot body, and hair game is so on point. – *Ig_muscleguys*
This is amazing. – *Derekallenwatson*
Great cover, congrats! – *Magazineslover*

TAYLOR SWIFT WHO?
Love *From The Editor* in this issue. Good to know someone agrees with me when it comes to Taylor Swift. – *@rzacharias314*

QUEEN MUM?
Massive fan of Lisa Vanderpump (*Queen Of Beverly Hills, DNA* #190). Stoked to see her in DNA, and such a long feature! I wish she was my mum. – *Aaron R*

HOLY DROPPING GENITALS!
DNA's *Sexiest Men Alive* [#188] finally reached the magazine rack at B&N in Shreveport, Louisiana. I liked your editorial on the LGBT alphabet soup, which I abbreviate to "GAY". In researching what the letters stand for earlier this year, Intersex was the one I was least aware of, although I've known about hermaphrodites. I also learned about "Guevedoces" in the Dominican Republic, where some boys appear to be, and are raised as girls until they hit puberty, at which time their penis and testicles descend. It's caused by a lack of testosterone during pregnancy, but interestingly the syndrome seems only to occur there.

So, I enjoyed adding this issue to my collection. I was quite disappointed, to put it mildly, by Urban Homosexual. The column is out of step with the rest of the magazine. *Cordially, KK*

Thank you for your letter. As for the actions of Urban Homosexual, just imagine how his mother must feel!

FEELING THE LOVE
I had to send you guys feedback because I have been a huge fan for over a decade and there is no magazine like yours. The photography is insanely classic and beautiful and sexy, there is nothing to be changed. To me, personally, you guys are the best gay magazine out there. It's a work of art. Never change. *Love, Xavii Matisse*

"BACK TO BROTHERHOOD" (DNA #188)
Issue number 188 saved me from committing suicide! Your story *Back To Brotherhood* from Barrett Pall (above) uplifted me. Thank you. – *@VoltaireRyken*

A lot of us had it rough when younger, and feel alienated around straight people. It's getting better but I used to find that at straight gatherings I was expected to hang with the girls because I was gay. I wanted to hang with the boys! I recently caught up with old straight friends from the '80s. They went on and on about gay stuff until I politely pointed out what they were doing. They apologised and moved on into the 21st Century. – *Ozgrunt*

The irony has not been lost on the use of a magazine cover-worthy model to promote an article where one key point was the obsession on looks and perfection. It kinda cheapens the message of the article. – *Marco Selda*

This discussion is predicated on the assumption all gays want to live in the gay ghetto. I made a decision early in my life that my friends and acquaintances would be a mix of people, and that I would endeavour to integrate into mainstream society, not the gay subculture. It has worked for me. Most of the people I socialise with are not gay. We don't encounter the problems this article lists off. – *Joecdn*

Overheard in the DNA Office: "I'd actually be really interested in watching a documentary about glass eyes."

SWEET TWEETS

@BetteMidler People, Caitlyn Jenner says she is STILL voting GOP in 2016. Regardless of gender identity, I guess she identifies most as "uninformed".

@LMHPhotog Be the change you want to find in your couch.

@Guskenworthy How did people communicate before emojis?

@Meganamram I fundamentally understand Pacman because I too live my life sprinting after food.

@MikeCanRant Is it "fleek" or "on fleek"? I want Grandma's eulogy to be just right.

@Lamelion Straight men drooling over Kim Kardashian like they've never seen a drag queen before.

@Louisvirtel It's weird that Adele named her album "25" when she was 25 two years ago. It's like Robin Thicke naming an album "Relevant".

@Leemanish Sick of having to go to two different huts to buy pizza and sunglasses.

@Rhysnicholson When feeling threatened, some species of toad will excrete toxins to harm others. Catholics are very similar.

@TheTweetOfGod Jon Snow died for your sins and rose from the dead.

@JoshThomas87 Googling Justin Bieber's dick is one of the most normal things I know how to do.

@Adam86Valentine Real men wear whatever the fuck they want, and don't necessarily subscribe to established gender norms.

PHOTO OF BARRETT PALL BY TAYLOR MILLER

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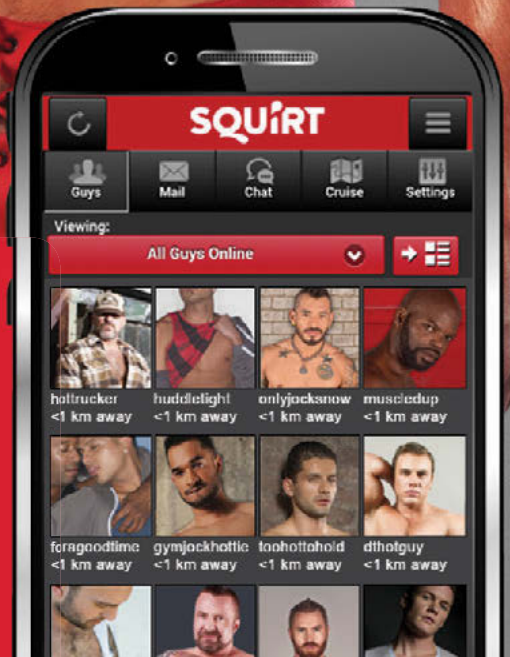

All in a day's work: (Top left to right) DNA's Phillip Portman, Matt Wilson, photographer Christian Scott. (Bottom left to right) Network Ten's Tim Wall and DNA's Andrew Creagh.

On Set With Matt

PHOTOGRAPHY CHRISTIAN SCOTT

THIS MONTH'S cover star, Matt Wilson has been on DNA's radar ever since he won the title of Australia's Hottest Tradie back in 2010. Seriously, imagine calling a carpenter out to do some work around the house and Matt turning up!

Handsome, naturally well-proportioned and easy going, Matt was then cast as an aussieBum model and has made numerous appearances on billboards and the back of buses around the world as a result! He's also appeared on Australian travel show, *Getaway*.

This year he made the big leap to *Neighbours* – the iconic, long-running Aussie soap opera. The show is currently not screened in the USA but is exported to over 60 countries and regularly reaches a UK audience of 20 million-plus. *Neighbours* began in 1985 and is set on Ramsay Street in the fictional Melbourne suburb of Erinsborough. It's about the day-to-day lives of ordinary Australians but there are, of course, explosions, kidnappings, poisonings, wedding disasters and lots of blackmail.

Matt plays professional stripper Aaron, one of three regular gay characters on the show. Thankfully, DNA's Online Coordinator, Phillip Portman, is an unashamed *Neighbours* tragic, so when the opportunity to feature Matt in DNA came up, Phil jumped at the chance to do the interview. At photographer Christian Scott's studio, Matt and Phil chatted about all things *Neighbours* including how to be an exotic dancer on a G-rated family show!

Matt is a dream to photograph. He's relaxed and comfortable in front of the camera and combines his experiences as a model with his actor's ability to slip into character and improvise. Unexpectedly, the people who live above the studio own an enormous macaw named Echo and they kindly agreed to let Matt hold her for one of the shots. She brings some tropical glamour to our "Boy Next Door's Summer Holiday" themed story.

After hours of slipping in and out of dozens of pairs of swimwear, trying on numerous hats, playing with props and being sprayed with oil, Matt's work was done and we knew we had a great shoot. We hope you enjoy these images and Matt's interview starting on page 54. And don't forget to catch up with Matt on *Neighbours* (Network Ten's channel 11 on free-to-air in Australia).

"Hello from the other side!"

Matt and Phillip catch up on all the goss from Ramsay Street – no spoilers!

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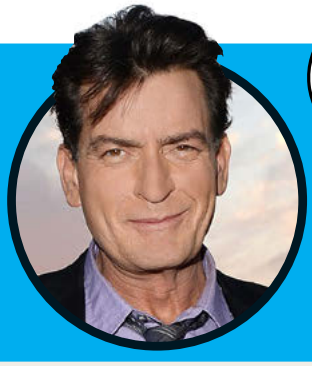
> “I’m here to admit that I am in fact HIV-positive. And I have to put a stop to this onslaught, this barrage of attacks and of sub-truths and very harmful and mercurial stories … which couldn’t be farther from the truth.”

– Charlie Sheen, formerly television’s highest-paid actor, also tells NBC’s Matt Lauer that his partying days are behind him.



SEE MORE

» **OLYMPIC CHAMPION** and newly out single gay Ian Thorpe tells *Sunday Style*, “Dating’s been a lot harder than I thought it would be. It’s an absolute mess out there! I’m like, ‘Where are all the normal people?’ I’ve never really dated, so I’ve come in being almost completely blindsided by this.”

» **THE OAK LAWN** area of Dallas, Texas, is put on police lock-down following a rash of violent crimes. Geoffrey Hubbard [pictured] is at least the twelfth bashing victim in three months.

» **AFTER BEING** spotted in a hardcore gay porn, Boxer Yusaf Mack claims he was drugged and raped on camera, but when the porn company, DawgPound, threatens to sue for libel, he recants and claims he’s bisexual. Days later, he says, “I’m tired of holding it in. It is what it is. I live my life. I’m gay.” Mack later hosts a hip hop coming out party at Rage in West Hollywood.

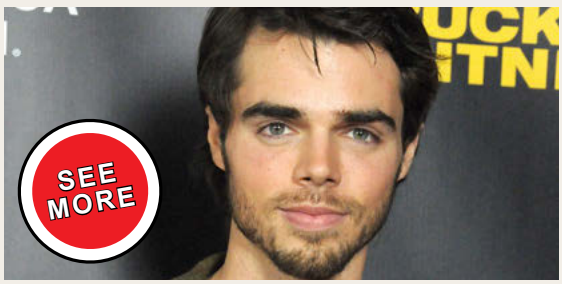
» **PASSION PIT** frontman Michael Angelakos comes out and explains his difficult divorce. “I just wanted so badly to be straight, because I love her so much. I think that was one of the most painful things when we decided to separate.”

» **MORMON CHURCH** officials issue new rules damning those in same-sex marriages as apostates and barring their children from receiving blessings or baptism. Children of apostates can only be baptised or serve in missions once they turn 18 and publicly disavow their parents’ marriage, no longer live with their parents and get approval from church leaders.

» **RUGBY REFEREE** Nigel Owens, who came out in 2007, tells CNN he once considered chemical castration. “[At that time] I didn’t want to be gay… A lot of people are struggling with who they are. They can’t tell other people they’re gay because they’re fighting it themselves. That’s one of the reasons a lot of people are not out in sport yet.” Owens refereed the 2015 World Cup final.

» **ACTRESS VIVICA FOX** suggests that rapper 50 Cent is gay. When asked on *Watch What Happens Live* why she thinks 50 Cent blamed *Empire*’s ratings dip on ‘gay stuff’, she says, “First of all, you know the pot calling the kettle black…” Many speculate she is alluding to 50 Cent’s relationship with fellow rapper, Soulja Boy.

» **COLOMBIA’S** highest court rules that gay individuals and couples may adopt children. In the landmark decision, the justices double down and add that “Doubts and fears about whether society is ready to accept this decision won’t be dissipated by being blind to an irrefutable reality.”



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Modern Family actor Reid Ewing pens an op-ed recounting his struggles with body dysmorphia and plastic surgery addiction. “I genuinely believed if I had one procedure I would suddenly look like Brad Pitt,” he writes. “None of the doctors suggested I consult a psychologist for what was clearly a psychological issue… or warn me about the potential for addiction.” He later comes out on Twitter, “I was never in [the closet].”

The Oxford Dictionary declares its Word Of The Year to be an emoji, officially called the “Face With Tears Of Joy”. “[It] was chosen as the ‘word’ that best reflected the ethos, mood, and preoccupations of 2015,” according to the dictionary’s blog.

Islamic State fighter Israfil Yilmaz hosts a Q&A on Tumblr. Among other things, he jokes about gay men deserving to be thrown off buildings [ISIS “celebrated” US marriage equality last June by throwing four gay men off a high building in Raqqa], and says it’s acceptable for girls to be taken as spoils of war.

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THE STUFF WE'RE *Loving...*

ENCYCLOPEDIA MADONNICA

Madonna's fan bible gets its New Testament with this 20th anniversary edition from fanboy Matthew Rettenmund. At a whopping 584 pages, it exhaustively covers the Queen's life and career with never-before-seen photos, obscure facts, unauthorized gossip, interviews from those who knew her when, collectibles, illustrations and much more. For those too young to know what an encyclopedia is, it's got everything – from birth to *Bitch, I'm Madonna*!
Find it on Amazon or wherever you buy books.

JANE THE VIRGIN

Not just another tele-novela, *Jane The Virgin* starring Gina Rodriguez is hilarious. Snaps to the seamless integration of Latin culture into a big-budget US production. Streaming now on Netflix to satisfy your binge watching habit.

ICE-COLD ALASKAN ADVENTURES

Not all queens want Caribbean capers and Mediterranean madness on their all-gay cruise. RSVP Cruises took 1,900 gays to Alaska last August, departing from Seattle. Our correspondent, Joshua Heath, reported that as the temperatures dropped the parties heated up, with many relying on shared body heat to stay warm! "Ages ranged from early thirties to mid-eighties with everyone there for two reasons – one of which was to enjoy the magnificent Alaskan scenery," says Joshua. "I even took to the sky in a helicopter before landing and trekking for two hours across a glacier in what can only be described as a mind-blowing adventure."
For more: Rsvpvacations.com

HANDSOME SKINCARE

There's nothing like a little banksia and bergamot body wash to butch up your bathroom. Handsome Men's Skincare not only offers some beautiful product ranges including shave gel, moisturiser and shampoo, the masculine black-and-white packaging keeps you feeling blokey, too!
Go to (the slightly awkward web address) https://ha.ndso.me/

HOT NEW AUSSIE SWIMWEAR

We are loving Wild Barra swimwear, from Cairns in Far North Queensland. Snapped are Johnny, Kalwin and Cyril backstage at the range launch. Wild Barra is described as "the Aussie sunga" – a nod to the Brazilian styling. The Wild Ginger and Australian Dingo prints, however, are unmistakably Aussie.
For more: Wildbarra.com.au

THE CORD ROLL

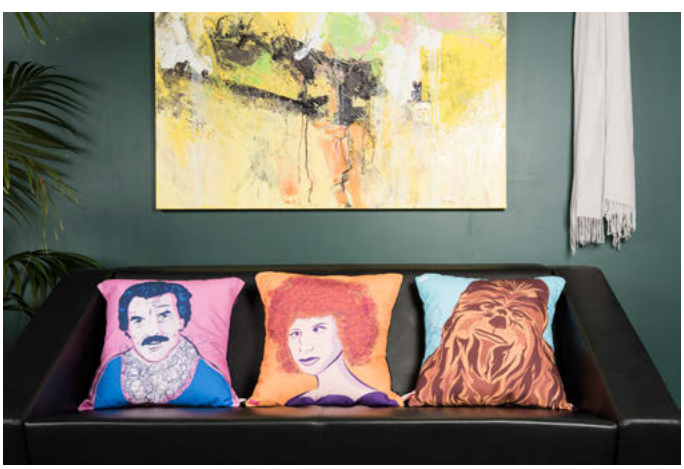
Aussie pilot, surfer, skier and all-round adventuresome traveller, Shane Thompson, has invented a simple and stylish way to arrive at your destination without your phone cords and cables being in an ungodly tangle. It's called The Cord Roll and you can be an early adopter and support this product at afternoonswithalbert.com

BOXED WATER

No one wants to add to the Texas-sized whirlpool of plastic rubbish swirling around in the Pacific, right? So if you must buy water, consider buying it in a recyclable cardboard box!

WOOKIE CUSHIONS

Who doesn't need a Chewbacca throw cushion, right? Or a Barbra Streisand scatter, or a Tom Selleck-inspired pillow? These hare-brained soft furnishings are walking out the door at The Makery, 106 Oxford St, Darlinghurst or find them online at thescallywagsociety.com.



That Summer Thing

With the Southern Hemisphere sizzling in the hottest summer on record, we asked visitors to DNAmagazine.com.au about their favourite season.

WHICH SEASON IS YOUR FAVOURITE?

"Summer of course!" said Aussie Lad, "Because that is when the sexy, hot looking guys get out in as little as they like – or nothing at all." The seasons' popularity descended in order of their warmth.

Summer 43%
Spring 24%
Autumn 21%
Winter 12%

WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO SWIM?

Twelve percent don't like swimming! Perhaps the same 12 percent who said they don't go to the beach and prefer winter as their favourite season.

Pool 44%
Beach 36%
Lake 5%
River 3%
I don't like swimming 12%

WHAT DO YOU WEAR TO THE BEACH?

Apart from the dry 12 percent who don't go to the beach at all, it came as no surprise that most DNA readers prefer a speedo-style swimmer, although some of you said you also enjoy not wearing anything at all.

Speedos 39%
Boardshorts 24%
Trunks 24%
Mankini 1%
I Don't Go To The Beach 12%

BEACH FOOTWEAR: WHAT DO YOU CALL THEM?

The answer to this question depends on where you live. Americans call beach footwear flip flops. (To Australians that's what you do to your boyfriend after he's done it to you!). Australians call them thongs, which to Americans is a kinky jockstrap. New Zealanders call them jandals (somewhere between sandal and, er, who knows). And the brand conscious go with Havaianas.

Flip Flops 50%
Thongs 41%
Jandals 5%
Havaianas 4%

HOW DO YOU TAN?

This question really polarised readers with a clear distinction between those who do and those who don't. Sunbeds and fake tanning weren't really options. One reader, Misumu, suggested we needed a, "I have one naturally" option, while Radar69 said, "I don't tan, I burn and then peel."

I don't tan 49%
Sunbathing in the sun 45%
Tanning bed 4%
Spray tan by a professional 1%
Tan in a can/over the counter products 1%

MORE: Vote in our latest poll at www.DNAmagazine.com.au

LEAD IMAGE OF ANDREA GIULIANI BY SIMON LE, DNA #170.

Lqd.com.au
LOOK THE BEST YOU CAN
Photographer: Kevin McDermott
2014 Australian Award Winner – Best New Moisturiser and Best New Shaving Cream/Gel.
Lqd
FACE
shave
Lqd
FACE
hydrate

Out All Night!

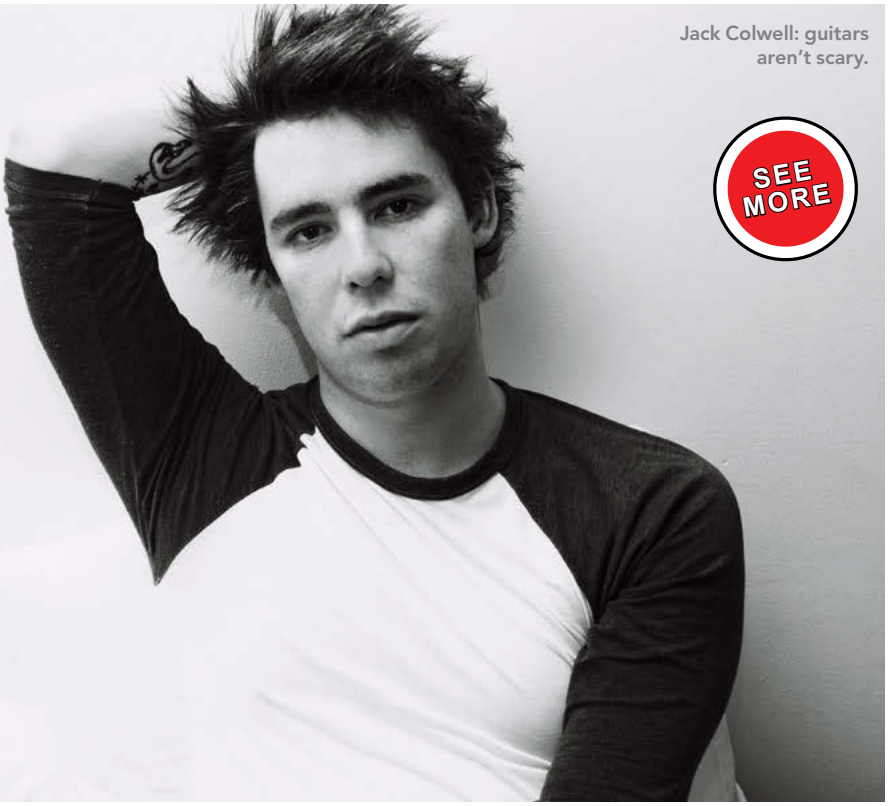
» Libertine takes fashion to trashy new heights (or is that depths?)

THE SPIRIT OF PUNK didn't die, it moved to LA and started a fashion label. Since 2001, Johnson Hartig's fashion label Libertine has been blinding the front-rowers with gawdy colours and DIY styling. The label has gathered fans as diverse as Miley Cyrus and Mick Jagger along the way. Libertine's Spring/Summer 2016 men's range is, says Hartig, inspired by German '70s art, with a "more is more" ethos and an "out all night" energy. Why not spend the day in slippers, we ask?

HOW WELL DO YOU SCRUB UP?

MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY OURS

Lqd.com.au



Jack Colwell: guitars aren't scary.

SEE MORE

The True Spirit Of Rock

» He's a classically trained musician who likes to rock and isn't afraid of exploring emotional anguish in a gay sauna. Marc Andrews speaks to **Jack Colwell**.

DNA: Tell us about yourself.
Jack Colwell: I grew up on the Northern beaches of Sydney. My mum was a concert pianist and a music teacher, which is how I ended up in music. I was classically trained at the Conservatorium Of Music in the double bass and piano and composition. I was in the SBS Television Orchestra but I always wanted to write songs. I was doing a lot of classical composition and it wasn't coming as naturally as songwriting.
Was this when you were going through your Kate Bush phase? Oh, Kate Bush is a lifelong thing [laughs], but Tori Amos has been my biggest idol since discovering her as a teenager. Her *Boys For Pele* album really resonated during a particularly angsty time. I also really admired the work of Patrick Wolf, PJ Harvey, Nick Cave and Perfume Genius. I think he is paving the way to be a really courageous artist.
Is it fair to call your music "indie rock"? Yeah, definitely. I once thought of myself as a classical musician and now think of myself as a rock musician with a classical background.
Are you defying the notion that gay boys don't like rock music? People associate rock music with this really masculine, violent, powerful sound but, to me, true rock artists, like Tori Amos and Kate Bush, are vulnerable, muscular, and show the depths of their sound. To me that is the true spirit of rock music.
No one needs to be afraid of guitars then? Guitars aren't scary. You plug them in and you're the boss; they are not the boss of you. For me there is an overwhelming sense of power in rock that I don't get from others areas of music. Gay boys tend to shy away from that genre for whatever reason, but some of our greatest icons are steeped in it – people like Freddie Mercury, Elton John, and the musical *Hedwig And The Angry Inch.*
Let's talk about your video for *Don't Cry These Tears*, filmed in a gay sauna. I filmed that clip a year before John Grant did his clip [also shot in a gay sauna] for *Disappointing*. I worked with a gay couple on the video who are also a creative duo and it took us a while to get it ready. The song is about trying to convince yourself of this idea you know all the answers to your emotional anguish. The idea of the sauna came along when we were looking at environments where you could have a persona, or bravado, but really be vulnerable and exposed, both literally and emotionally.

> "True rock artists are vulnerable, muscular, and show the depths of their sound."

Can people see your live show and meet you on Grindr after? I haven't used Grindr for a while [laughs]. I did use it for a time, but I do have a partner now.
Is marriage something you'd consider? If I felt like it was the right thing to do, I would. It's only a matter of time before gay marriage is passed in Australia. I'd like *Malibu* by Hole played at my wedding.
Has being openly gay been an issue working in rock? My sexuality isn't something that I have ever tried to hide, either in my personal life or as an artist. If that was something that bothered me I wouldn't have done a clip in a bathhouse. It hasn't defined me as an artist, as opposed to some other people.
What do you mean? I feel quite lucky in the genre of indie or rock that I don't seem to be defined by my sexuality. Someone like John Grant is perhaps in a similar position. As an artist it is important to stand up for your rights and your sexuality when the time calls, but as an artist it's good to have a universal message so you can show people that the work created by queer people can be enjoyed by all sorts of people.
Do you consider yourself a role model? I don't feel that personally, but as someone who identifies as a gay artist and someone who lacked gay idols when growing up, I found a lot of that in music and art. Sexuality is considered in a different way now in 2015 than it was even in 2005. The next generation has the opportunity to have an icon or a role model that better suits their needs, like Troye Sivan. I'm not calling myself a role model, but my work and my legacy might be a message for someone else.

MORE: *Jack's EP **Only When Flooded Could I Let Go** is available at selected online music stores. For more find him on Facebook, Soundcloud and Twitter.*

MIDSUMMA

17 JAN–7 FEB 2016

WORLD RENOWNED ARTS & CULTURE
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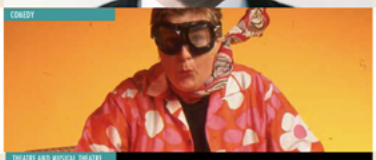
THE 2016 MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL PREMIER EVENTS

MICHAL GRIFFITHS - COLE

20 - 24 JAN
FORTYFIVEDOWNSTAIRS

VIRTUAL DRAG

1 - 7 FEB
TESTING GROUNDS



LESBIAN COMEDY GALA

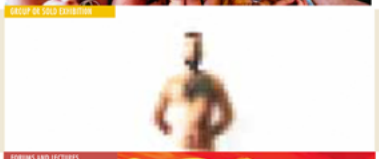
30 JAN
PRESTON CITY HALL

ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

22 JAN - 15 FEB
INCINERATOR GALLERY

DRAGNATION

6 FEB
THE GH HOTEL



COMPANY OF MEN

21 JAN - 5 FEB
SECOND STORY STUDIOS

ELEGY

19 - 6 FEB
GASWORKS ARTS PARK

SCHOOLS OUT FOR MIDSUMMA

6 FEB
AEU BUILDING

GONE

3 - 6 FEB
GASWORKS ARTS PARK

YASS PRIDE!

31 JAN
LUNA PARK

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MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL

CONRAD SEWELL – ALL I KNOW

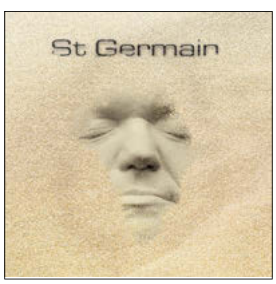
All we know is that Conrad's heartfelt *Start Again*, which rightfully topped the charts, is the kind of gospel-tinged pop ballad that Adele and Sam Smith would willingly have a bitchfight over. Fear not that the long blond locked Conrad from BrisVegas is a one hit wonder. Follow-up single *Who You Lovin* conjures shades of Michael Jackson. The other tracks on this taster EP are a master class on why Mr Sewell is likely to be Australia's next global sensation. *Shadow* is slinky, sexy fare that, once again, evokes a touch of the Jacksons; *21 Questions* is state-of-the-world commentary done the right way; while the acoustic version of his dance smash with Kygo, the crowdpleasing *Firestone*, becomes a gripping piano ballad suggesting he's been listening to a lot of Bruno Mars, which is not a bad thing if you're collecting his royalty cheques!

HURTS – SURRENDER

For some obscure reason the sartorially swish Brit pop duo Hurts have become stars in far-flung locales like Finland and Poland. That may be because their storming pop choruses and singalong "do-do-do" bits are easy for non-native English speakers to chant along with. On their third album, Hurts sound brighter and less rock'n'roll than on their "difficult" second album, *Exile*. While first single *Some Kind Of Heaven* disappointed, *Nothing Will Be Bigger Than Us* features the guiding hand of super-producer Stuart Price. He also assists on the track *Kaleidoscope* to bring out their more shiny, bright, colourful chart-friendly side as the title suggests.

SARAH BLASKO – ETERNAL RETURN

For her fifth album, confessional singer/songwriter Sarah is tougher and grittier, and less sweet and twee than on her previous releases. Album opener *I Am Ready* with its "It hurt but I asked for it" lyrical slant is a bittersweet valentine to past pain and a hopeful future. *I Wanna Be Your Man* could be Sarah acting out Prince fantasies, so it's little surprise her aim for this album was to able to "dance around in a lounge room". While it's easy to point out Taylor Swift had a similar idea with her unit-shifting *1989* album, *Eternal Return* heralds something different. This is a sophisticated, chic and thoughtful work.



ST GERMAIN – ST GERMAIN

It was 15 years ago that French "world music" act St Germain appeared ready for world domination. The breakout album, *Tourist*, featuring groundbreaking track *Rose Rouge*, effortlessly bridged a gap between jazz and house music. Alas then, for the next decade or more, nothing, nada, *rien*. Now St Germain, the stage name of producer boffin Ludovic Navarre, has finally been inspired again and this time it's by the sounds of Mother Africa. The good news is it's still recognisably St Germain, even if the sounds have become more jazzy and less house-y. Could just be this summer's perfect chill-out record or, if you live in the northern hemisphere, your next cosy dinner party beside the fire.

JEAN-MICHEL JARRE – ELECTRONICA 1: THE TIME MACHINE

Looking nowhere near his 67 years, French electronic music pioneer/wizard Jean-Michel decided if it was good enough for Giorgio Moroder to return to the hamster wheel then he should, too. His 18th album, subtly titled *Electronica 1: The Time Machine,* in case you missed the connection to his past, is a collection of collaborations, like Giorgio recently did with Sia, Kylie and Britney. However, being the keen European he is, Mr Jarre has teamed with the likes of Massive Attack, Erasure's Vince Clarke, Moby, Little Boots, Air and DJ Armin Van Buuren. He wanted this album to tell electronic music history, and it's a fitting tribute to his legacy.

BIG BAND WITH JAZZ HANDS

THIS YEAR the London Gay Big Band celebrates their fifth anniversary. Formed in 2011, this 20-piece jazz orchestra is composed of predominantly LGBT musicians and vocalists.

In 2014 the act crashed the party of Britain's Got Talent and reached the semi-final with the glamorous high heel assist of drag artist, La Voix. After appearing throughout the UK, including London Pride (and a guest slot at Sitges Pride in Spain), the band takes it to the next level with their debut album, Brave.

Recorded at London's renowned Abbey Road Studios, *Brave* sees LGBB teaming with 13 UK vocalists from the jazz scene, West End stage and TV screen. Clare Teal, Claire Martin, Ian Shaw, Emma Hatton, Sharon D Clarke, La Voix, Ria Jones, Paul Robinson, Sarah Moule, Rachel Weston, Stephen Duffy, Lara De Belder and Crawford McInally-Kier all get their due on the record, hence it is credited to "London Big Gay Band and Friends".

"Recording at Abbey Road, in the world famous Studio 2, was like a dream come true for the band," manager, Stefan Doering, admits. "To be able to work on such a project is something we could never have imagined when we founded the group. Working in an environment so steeped in musical history, standing on the shoulders of some of the greatest artists of all time, this recording firmly puts the LGBB on the map and is a momentous milestone in our journey."

The LGBB's Musical Director says the idea behind the album was "to create an entirely unique offering that has never been done before on the traditional jazz scene. Bringing together vocalists from so many different genres and musical backgrounds on one album has resulted in a completely fresh and distinct record." Tracks include *Too Darn Hot* (by jazz singer Clare Teal), *Cry Me A River* from Olivier-nominated actor Paul Robinson and – yes, ma'am! – La Voix reimagining the classic, *Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend*.

MORE: *Brave is released through Mood Indigo Productions. For more find them on Facebook and on Twitter @LGBigBand.*

How To Be The World's Top-Selling Musical Enigma In Five Easy Steps, by Adele.

"Hello. Bye bye."

1. DISAPPEAR FOR HALF A DECADE. Adele took over five years – five years – to finish her new album, *25*. "My career's not my life, it's my hobby," she said recently. Adele also revealed it took her this long because she had nothing much to write about before that. Oh.

2. GET YOUR PERSONAL LIFE IN ORDER. What she failed to mention is that after her mega success, Adele became attached to a hot rich bear called Simon, had a baby with him and managed to squeeze in winning an Oscar, too (for the theme from the 007 movie *Skyfall*).

3. FORGET TO SPEAK TO YOUR PUBLIC. Adele isn't that keen on interviews ("I'd rather just not talk!") though when she does talk she likes to drop F-bombs in her Cockney accent and doesn't censor herself. Her record company initially gets worried, but then even more people love her and buy her albums because she is so "authentic".

4. RELEASE A NEW SINGLE THAT BLASTS PAST ALL YOUR PREVIOUS HITS. *Hello*, the first single from *25*, became 2015's fastest-selling single. It is a bittersweet ballad, the kind Adele does so well and better than, well, everyone else. So well, in fact, that it is likely to become her biggest hit ever, complete with an arty video from gay director Xavier Dolan who calls her, "a very talented actress".

5. RELEASE A NEW ALBUM LIKELY TO SELL EVEN MORE THAN YOUR LAST ONE. Adele's second album, *21*, sold 31 million copies. Her new one is called *25*, despite Adele now being 27, but that's how old she was when she started working on it. She credits her son, Angelo, with giving her the strength to keep working after witnessing pal Amy Winehouse felled along the way. "I don't know if I would've come back had I not had my kid. When I had him, it made everything right." Aww, nice to have you back, Missus.

Seventies Aussie glam rockers, Skyhooks (left to right): Freddie Strauks, Bob Starkie, Red Symons, Graeme "Shirley" Strachan, and Greg Macainsh.

THE GAYEST STRAIGHT BAND EVER!

» While others took the moral high ground, **Skyhooks** climbed a tree for a nude centerfold. In honour of the Aussie band's 40th anniversary, band member Bob Starkie tells all in this exclusive from Marc Andrews.

DNA: In the grand scheme of things how gay were Skyhooks?
Bob Starkie: From my observation about zero out of 10, but I could be wrong. Our original singer, Steve Hill, was bisexual.
The nude centrefold with *Cleo* magazine – talk us through that. Well, it was about the money – and not much of it. There never seemed to be much money attached to the Skyhooks experience. I put that down to management. Only three of us did it – Red [Symons], myself and Shirl [lead singer Graeme "Shirley" Strachan]. The other two took a higher moral ground. We did the shoot in a dry, barren paddock on a farm near Bendigo. There we are, naked up a dead tree, when the farmer's wife pulls up with a ute-load of teenage girls looking for autographs!
What was the result? Something to hang up on the Skyhooks memorabilia wall for the grandkids to laugh at. As for winning more male fans – who knows? The gay community always dug the band, even in the very early days. A gay woman called Jan would hire Skyhooks for these amazing dances she'd set up and the audience were into us and gay enough for our lead singer Shirl to be on the front of Australia's first gay magazine, *Campaign,* without a story inside. The two guys who look after the band's archives are a same-sex couple and Skyhooks played a big part in their lives when they were teenagers.
What was the band's message with your 1976 album, *Straight In A Gay, Gay World*?
Greg Macainsh [band member] wrote the song so you'd be better off asking him. It's a bit of a dig at how crazy everyone was in dress, style, attitudes and coming out from the point of view of someone who hadn't changed. I contributed the black sheep to the record cover – the black sheep of the family, which probably a lot of gay teenagers could relate to.
How many of the band's songs directly referred to gay men or their like? *Toorak Cowboy, The Other Side,* a double entendre

depending on which way you look at it, and of course there was *The Bruce Suite* which were three songs we'd play in a row: *Big Bad Bruce*, a parody of the old *Big Bad John* song, about a stereotype LA hairdresser, followed by *Straight In A Gay, Gay World* and *I'm Normal*.

Was this considered pushing the envelope back then or just being topical? Skyhooks always pushed the envelope to some extent. Six of the ten songs on the debut album were banned with Mike Willesee [TV host] attempting, and failing, to give the band a lecture on morals on national TV.

Your biggest competition in the Australian charts at the time was Sherbet, essentially a boy band. Did you ever compare notes? No, not really. Daryl from Sherbet and our lead singer, Shirl, were mates. Skyhooks were a bit like The Rolling Stones to Sherbet's The Beatles. I guess we were the bad boys. They wrote songs about summer love and Skyhooks wrote about being good in bed. It was a good sign when the first song to be played on air on 2JJ [now Triple J] was Skyhooks' *You Just Like Me Cos I'm Good In Bed*.

Sherbet briefly broke in the UK but Skyhooks never managed to break out globally. Why? We went to America and started to break in certain territories there, but I think we would have done better in the UK. They would have understood what were saying for a start [laughs]. They would have got the Red versus Shirl banter in our live performances and Shirl could have fucked one of Mick Jagger's wives and got us in the papers. Who knows?!

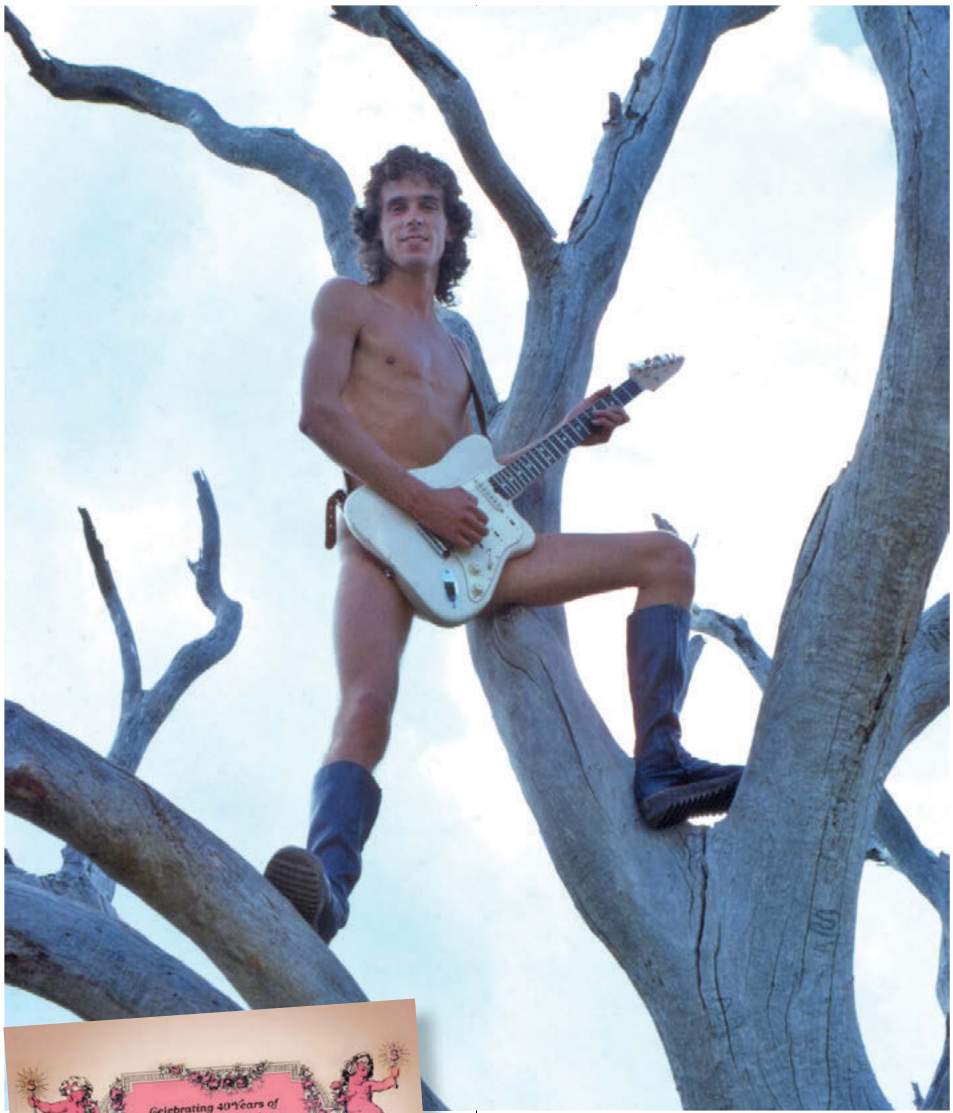
On a scale of one to 10 how gay is Red Symons really? Gay: zero. Camp: 11.

A song like *Horror Movie* seems ahead of its time. Do you agree? Not ahead of its time, but certainly relevant, if not more-so today. It has a lot of traction as a song and always gets a good reaction live. Little kids seem to love it, too. It gets played by college radio stations in the States a lot around Halloween.

Is *All My Friends Are Getting Married* the ultimate gay man's lament? It should be *All My Friends Are Getting Married For The Third Time*! But to take your point, it is painfully pathetic how same-sex marriage is being played out politically here.

Why did the band eventually dissolve? It was like being on a train and people occasionally got off and sometimes got back on further down the track.

Why get back together now on your 40th anniversary? *Rockwiz* [TV show] was doing live shows with an Aria Award Winners theme. Brian Nankervis [TV producer] talked Red into being on the panel and then asked him if he would get the band back together for a couple of numbers. He must have got him on a good day [laughs]. When I heard Red was doing it, I said, "I'm in!" Red did seem to have second thoughts. He appeared to be addressing demons but in the wash-up I think he enjoyed the experience.



Any regrets about your time with The Hooks? On balance, no, but having said that there were some brutal aspects attached to the experience as one would expect from a rollercoaster ride that no-one was expecting.

Were the '70s really all sex, drugs and rock'n'roll… and was gay sex in the mix? The short answer is yes and gay sex was in the mix, front and centre, just not with the Skyhooks.

Who do you see as doing the same kind of work now that you guys did in your heyday? The Scissor Sisters, or Robbie Williams.

> "Shirl could have fucked one of Mick Jagger's wives and got us in the papers. Who knows?!"

What do you want readers to know about Skyhooks now? We've never been afraid to frock up and rock out and neither should they. They should go out and buy *Don't You Believe What You've Seen Or You've Heard*, our new three-CD release! If you haven't heard Skyhooks before its totally unique and, you never know, you might just love it.

MORE: *Don't You Believe What You've Seen Or You've Heard is released through Festival/Warner Music. A best of compilation, Hits'N'Riffs, is also available.*

Stuck In The Middle With You

» Choosing proves complex for the bisexual, and stressful for the easy-going gay man at the heart of the Chilean drama, ***In The Grayscale***. Review by Jesse Archer.

IN SANTIAGO, CHILE, attractive, professional Bruno (Francisco Celhay) is having a tough time of it. He's a successful architect, husband and father, but he's crashing solo above his own father's workshop because, as he tells his wife, he needs "some time, some distance". The cliché doesn't express more than a vague middle-class, mid-life crisis, and neither does the pat excuse he gives his father. "Happiness gets old," he says, when the old man suggests Bruno has a perfect life.

In The Grayscale does not revel in its reveals. The audience isn't entirely sure, and neither is Bruno, precisely why he needs this space, or why it is a struggle just to get out of bed. Even masturbation feels like a chore. As a celebrated architect, his designs are not stock utilitarian but ideological, precisely what his latest civic tribute commission demands. To find inspiration, he sets off to explore the hidden sites of Santiago by bicycle with a charming tour guide named Fernando (Emilio Edwards).

When the irrepressibly endearing Fernando turns out to be gay, and is very black and white about his identity – Bruno's gray areas begins to blush. He appears determined to seek out options he may have earlier forestalled; alternate existences he didn't fully explore. When he was a much younger man, Bruno was self-aware enough to want to check out a gay bar, but on the very night he was headed there he got waylaid and ended up meeting his future wife. So he never did explore other tendencies, which didn't torture him because being with women was always an option. However, a lingering *je ne sais quoi* has snuck up, and intensifies with fun-loving Fer.

In The Grayscale's male leads are perfectly cast, and strikingly mismatched: Fer is outgoing and daring; Bruno modest and careful. Bruno loves happy endings; Fer finds them cheesy. A rebuffed first kiss between the two is curiously omitted from the final edit and only referenced after the fact. It is an odd, jarring, but perhaps brilliant choice by first-time director Claudio Marcone that leaves audiences wondering, perhaps like Bruno, what more might have been said, or left undone.

Despite mutual attraction, their relationship is a slow and tense build. The two men don't get physical until halfway through the film but once they do, the sex sequence is a pent-up release that is well-earned and worth the wait. But even after their relationship turns intimate, easy answers are not forthcoming. Having waded into complicated territory, the film takes pains to dispel the notion that gay men fantasise about conquering a straight man. Fer unequivocally states it's stressful for someone so sure where his attraction lies to fall for a man who exists in the "wide range of grays". And for those between the binary, like Bruno, picking sides isn't depicted as easy, lazy or greedy. Bisexuality is not equal opportunity so much as it is a crippling burden. When a public kiss sees Bruno outed by his young son, he is under pressure to return to conventional life or continue exploring this side of himself. Watching this unfold, one begins to wonder why it's a decision he should have to make.

Along with his romantic loyalties, Bruno's architectural commission is languishing in indecision. Finally, he proposes an homage to a colonial bridge that was once a source of pride but has long since been destroyed by modern interference and natural disaster. The metaphor is too easy: a bridge leads from one place to another and will strand the hesitant over a chasm. Bruno may be on a bridge to nowhere, and a bicycle chase in the final scenes yields an emotional confrontation that will leave viewers feeling especially conflicted.

Fine performances, languorous pacing, and a sparse script perfectly strike the moody tone both in real time and the inner world of a pensive protagonist. But *In The Grayscale*'s most redeeming quality may lie in the way it unsympathetically explores bigger questions than it is prepared to solve.

MORE: *In The Grayscale is available on all digital platforms including iTunes, Vimeo On Demand, and WolfeOnDemand.com. It is also out on DVD at Wolfe Video and other retailers.*

"A bridge leads from one place to another and will strand the hesitant over a chasm."

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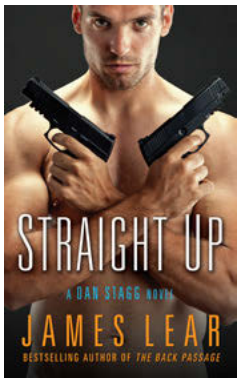
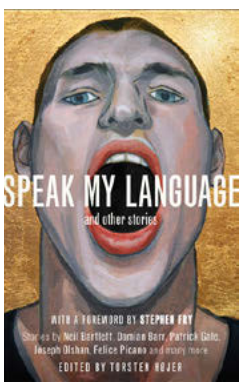


STRAIGHT UP (Dan Stagg Book 2)

– James Lear

James Lear (the nom de plume of novelist Rupert Smith) is one of the bestselling authors of popular gay fiction today and his latest continues his winning formula of sizzling, frequent sex scenes (there is typically action in every chapter) and good solid storytelling. Straight Up is the second book in his new contemporary series which is like a mash-up of gay erotica and a Lee Child thriller. Lear is probably best-known for his previous series set in the 1920s and inspired by Agatha Christie – The Secret Tunnel was a pastiche of Murder On The Orient Express. He has also published several stand-alone novels such as The Low Road, which took its inspiration from Robert Louis Stevenson's Kidnapped.

If you haven't encountered Dan Stagg before you should really begin with Book 1 (The Hardest Thing). Dan Stagg is an ex-marine who was dishonourably discharged for the offence of having sex with another man. Now scraping by in Boston working in a gym, Dan gets recruited by an ex-army buddy, Al Benson, to look into the mysterious death of Al's "close friend". It doesn't take much detective work for Dan to discover that Al was actually having it off with his friend and is devastated by his death. However, Dan knows exactly how to comfort Al and is an absolute expert at bedding supposedly straight men. Some readers may find that this chapter alone is worth the price of the book for the helpful tips and insights it offers in the art of straight man seduction!

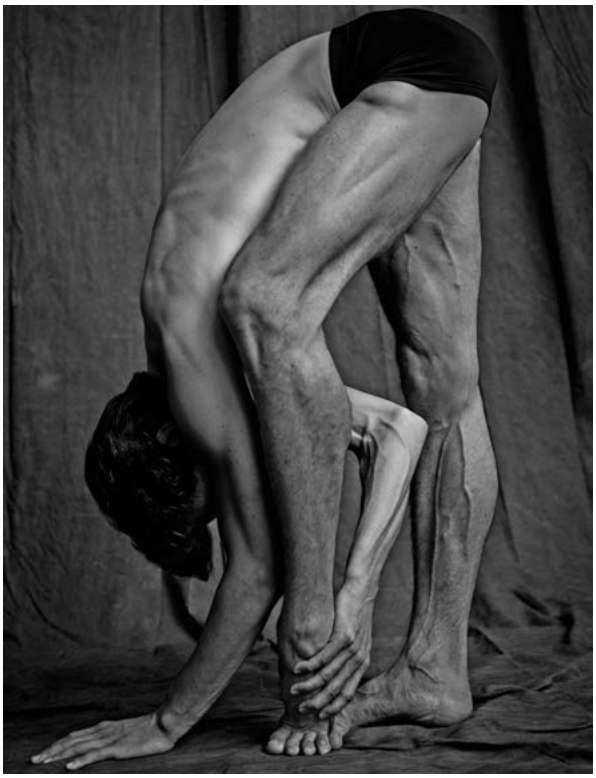


SPEAK MY LANGUAGE

– Edited by Torsten Hojer

Two decades ago, anthologies of gay-themed stories were extremely popular with readers and both small and major publishers. Penguin USA used to publish an annual series, Men On Men, while Australian publishers like Blackwattle Press published numerous popular anthologies and nurtured local talent. However, enthusiasm for anthologies has fallen sharply and this is probably due to costs. Anthologies can be expensive to produce if the authors are being paid properly, which makes it hard to turn a profit. These days almost the only gay anthologies still published are of erotica. So it is extremely refreshing to see Constable & Robinson publishing this big chunky anthology of gay-themed short fiction. They have published both gay erotica and short fiction before under their Mammoth imprint and they were high-quality anthologies that sold extremely well. The editor, Torsten Hojer, has also recruited an impressive line-up of well-known authors including Neil Bartlett, Francis King, Patrick Gale, Damon Galgut, Rupert Smith, Vestal McIntyre, Felice Picano, Joseph Olshan, Lawrence Schimel and Paul Magrs. There are also stories from authors who we haven't heard from in a while such as Neal Drinnan, James Robert Baker, Hugh Fleetwood and Sebastian Beaumont; and also rising stars like Damian Barr (Maggie And Me) and Michael Carroll (Little Reef). There is also an impressive diversity in the settings of the stories, which roam to countries including Australia, Cuba, England, Greece, Italy, Kenya, Portugal, Russia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka and the USA. All writers had to meet the stipulation that a major component of the story be concerned with gay life, and the reader will encounter a multitude of perspectives, ages, eras, cultures and political climates.

MORE: *The Bookshop Darlinghurst specialises in gay and lesbian books. Phone (02) 9331 1103, email info@thebookshop.com.au, visit www.thebookshop.com.au or in person at 207 Oxford Street, Sydney.*



LES DANSEURS

– Photography by Matthew Brookes

For his first book, photographer Matthew Brookes turns his lens upon the professional male ballet dancers of Paris. Interestingly, this opportunity only came about by chance. A friend of Brookes introduced him to one of the ballet dancers from the Paris Opera as a potential subject. He photographed the dancer, who then suggested Brookes should photograph his peers. Over the course of a year, he took these dancers out of their regular environment of rehearsals and performances and photographed them in a raw space. They were invited to explore the physicality of dance in its purest form, and some of the most remarkable images show them interpreting birds falling from the sky. The superb physiques and physicality of the men is extremely impressive and is highlighted by their brief costumes, dressed identically in black tights or trunks. Les Danseurs is an utterly striking series of black-and-white portraits and although it is a slim volume at 72 pages, the Australian price of $60 is reasonable for this high-quality hardcover edition.

"They were invited to explore the physicality of dance in its purest form, and some of the most remarkable images show them interpreting birds falling from the sky."

Les Danseurs by Matthew Brookes.

FUTURE TRIPPING

» Ever imagined ordering coffee from your watch, or printing photos off your phone? This and more from **the world of tech.**

A WHOLE NEW BREW

Geeks like a morning Joe, especially after a session with an overnight Joe. But every day we have to wrestle with the damn coffee machine. All that messy fiddling with filters, water and beans and whatnot isn't glamorous. We want an appliance that, when summoned, delivers any concoction of coffee on demand without the fuss. Of course it has to be gorgeous as well. Enter the Scanomat's TopBrewer. It looks like a water faucet but this marvelous kitchen device delivers hot coffee straight into your cup. Lattes, espressos, cappuccinos, flat whites, and hot chocolates are all possible. Plus, it's all direct to order from your iPhone and Apple Watch. It's beautifully Danish-designed, too. Overnight Joe will no doubt be very jealous of your morning Joe.
www.scanomat.com

SAVE THE CORNEAS

We all love our iPhones. Swiping, pinching, and zooming on photos is great. Although reading the news, or even your Twitter feed from a backlit display is like staring into a headlight. When it's time to read, we need a paper-like display that's easy on the eyes. inkCase Second Screen adds a 4.3 inch E-Ink display (diagonally across screen) to the back of your iPhone connected wirelessly through Bluetooth. It has a paper-like viewing experience that makes reading on your phone so enjoyable that there's no more excuses not to!
http://oaxis.com/home-2/products/inkcase-i6

IS THAT A POLAROID IN YOUR POCKET?

Gay boys take thousands of photos, but the images go no further. If you want to give that friend, foe or fuck a memory that he can cherish in his hot little hands, give him a real-life instant photo. Much like the polaroid before it, Prynt is a device that attaches to your smartphone and prints any photo instantly. It's an awesome gadget for photography fans and selfie-addicts. It uses a thermal printer, so you never have to worry about buying ink. The photo quality isn't Ansel Adams, but it has that charm instant cameras are known for, and it'll definitely get your pic into pockets.
www.pryntcases.com

MORE: *Michael Bamford is a computer programmer, tech geek and depraved circuit boy. Find him at Michael@michaelbamford.com.*

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BOOZING WITH THE BARD

What happens when whiskey meets tragedy extemporaneously? The Off-Broadway smash, ***The Drunk Shakespeare Society***.

IN MACBETH, William Shakespeare wrote, "Drink, sir, is a great provoker." To any stage actor Shakespeare is gospel, but this quote is being taken quite seriously – or rather not so seriously – by cutting-edge New York theatre group, *The Drunk Shakespeare Society.*

In what's described as a riotous mix of high art and low comedy, these thespians perform Macbeth on a nightly basis to an intimate audience. The unique difference to traditional interpretations is that one of the actors has five shots of whiskey in the first act!

What occurs from that point forward is hilariously unorthodox, even eccentric, but perhaps embodies the quirky spirit of ye olde English theatre. Says one of the troupe, "Acting while drunk is like being told that you have keys to all the cages at the zoo. It is utterly exhilarating but sometimes very scary… and you want to make sure you let out the right animals." The improvisation created by these actors often involves references to modern pop culture, and also invites a fun interaction with the audience. Actors have been known to speak as Yoda, strip their clothes off, even poke fun at Justin Bieber, but they still retain the plot – and their Shakespearean craft.

After getting the idea from the popular Shitfaced Shakespeare at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Aussie producer Scott Griffin took the concept to the Three Day Hangover Company in New York City. Together with director David Hudson, they auditioned 1,300 actors for the ten roles. With two rotating casts performing on alternate nights, up to 50 percent of the performance can end up improvised.

Audience members can get in on the act by paying extra to play a king or a queen. These roles come with the royal treatment of champagne, caviar, chocolates, cocktails and a crown, plus decision-making powers such as executions and pardons.

While some reviews call it juvenile humour, others have said The Drunk Shakespeare Society is the best Off-Broadway show they have ever seen and the highlight of their visit to the Big Apple. The point is to enter with an open mind and perhaps have a drink or two yourself. Mind you, many non-drinkers have also given it the thumbs up. It should be noted that the society itself does not condone excessive drinking, with the actors carefully monitored and alternated. By their own admission they are a "drinking club with a Shakespeare problem".

One can only wonder what Sir Laurence Olivier would have made of this, although we imagine Richard Burton would've approved as he often performed sozzled anyway. But what of The Bard himself? One can only hope he'd raise an ale and be inspired to write a brand new play!

MORE: *The Drunk Shakespeare Society plays at The Lounge at Roy Arias Stages, 300 West 43rd Street, NYC. Visit: www.drunkshakespeare.com*

> "Acting while drunk is like being told that you have keys to all the cages at the zoo… and you want to make sure you let out the right animals."

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TEN MORE TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER LIFE

» Life: it's quality over quantity. That said, quality of life is bound to boost its quantity!

1 USE RAW HONEY
People often use honey instead of artificial sweeteners. Although it has a lower GI than normal sugar, the real benefits are from honey's nutrients and enzymes. If the honey is treated (usually by heat) it loses its goodness, so opt for raw honey as often as you can.

2 DEAL WITH SUGAR CRAVINGS
Increase your protein at each meal. Often we grab for the sugar if we are hungry or need quick energy, but if you are full on a higher protein diet you will be less likely to be craving high sugar sweets.

3 ALWAYS TAKE THE STAIRS
If there is an option to take the stairs, take them. Unless you have an injury or a disability, this is a fun way to use your body more during the day. If you have been sitting in an office all day, get your heart rate up even just a little bit on the way to and from work.

4 CAN YOU RIDE TO WORK?
Incorporating a bike ride into a morning commute is a great way to increase the calories burned per day.

5 CHOOSE NATURAL SUGARS
Have you noticed how many products are sugar-free but still taste so sweet? They are often filled with artificial chemicals that trick your brain into thinking you're consuming sugar. These products are great for the hips but the chemicals aren't great for your liver, or overall health. If you are going to have something that tastes sweet you're better off enjoying natural sugars in limited quantities.

6 SURROUND YOURSELF WITH THOSE WHO UPLIFT
Spend more time with the people who lift you up and give you energy, and less time with the negative or emotionally draining people in your life. You will find that you have more to give others and will feel more fulfilled in your own life.

> "If you are going to have something that tastes sweet you're better off enjoying natural sugars in limited quantities."

7 BANANAS ARE YOUR FRIEND
These serotonin and mood boosting fruits have slow releasing energy, which keeps you feeling fuller (and happier) for longer!

8 COMPLETE THINGS
Allow your brain to de-clutter by putting less on your to-do list and focus instead on finishing one task at a time. Completing tasks releases serotonin in the brain, which makes you feel accomplished. Self-worth and motivation also increase, which creates more momentum for future endeavours.

9 READ. A LOT
There aren't many problems that haven't been investigated and resolved in a book somewhere.

10 WALK WITH BARE FEET
Feel the earth, and connect yourself to it!

MORE: *Dr Zac Turner MBBS RN BSc is Medical Director at Muse Clinic Darlinghurst, a specialist holistic cosmetic centre delivering injectables along with SkinFit, SoulFit and SexFit programs for clients to look and feel their best. www.museclinic.com.au*

Rise Of The Bromance

» Can male intimacy end homophobia? Christian Cintron hops into bed with a straight friend to find out.

James Hill and Austin Armacost share and bare in their *UK Celebrity Big Brother* bromance.

INTIMACY... we know we need it, but why is it so hard to connect? Many men are raised to put emotions on the backburner. We hear the terms "man up" or "don't be dramatic", which put a negative spin on expressing feelings and make it difficult to admit when we need understanding, a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on. Slowly but surely, we're becoming more accepting of gay relationships and, by extension, male-on-male affection. This wiggle room has given rise to the bromance.

A pejorative view of male affection has historically forced men to withhold emotionally, or to distance themselves from people they care about. This can lead to intimacy issues that impede meaningful emotional connection. Repression emotions may just guarantee you'll need therapy later. Why can't a bodybuilder cry, a solider like the colour pink, or a drag queen be a top?

A recent UK study galvanised the internet. In the journal *Men And Masculinities*, sociologists Eric Anderson and Mark McCormack wrote a paper based on interviews with male student athletes. They found that 98 percent of those polled had shared a bed with another guy and 93 percent have spooned or cuddled with another guy. The goal of their study was to see if the growth of homosocial behavior meant we were expanding our contemporary view of masculinity.

Austin Armacost (star of *The A-List* and Marc Jacobs' former boyfriend) and *The Apprentice UK* star James Hill have become the latest poster boys for the modern-day bromance movement. They won the most recent season of *Celebrity Big Brother UK* because the British public was fascinated with their relationship. On the voyeuristic reality show they shared a home, a bed, even a bathtub. For a month, viewers could watch these two dancing around in their underwear or wrestling. But they also formed a cheeky brotherhood as they shared secrets and talked about their crazy housemates. What was so fascinating is that it wasn't sexual or romantic. Armacost is married to a man and Hill is straight, but their friendship touched upon something deeper. These types of friendships and behaviors between men are usually cut down by gay panic or forbidden by social pressure. Their experience mirrors *Big Brother US* star Frankie Grande, who also had cuddle-time with his straight housemates.

The Ancient Greeks were pretty clear about the difference between eros (romantic love) and amistos (friendship love) and unafraid to accept either.

I'm in a bromantic relationship. I have a friend who is undeniably straight. On occasion, he'll come over we'll lay down together and watch a movie. Sometimes, he stays over and in the course of the night we might cuddle for a little bit. We talk openly about our feelings, have a lot in common, and share a genuine friendship. I have no doubts about his heterosexuality and I'm not trying to convert him or get him into bed for sex. What we share is pure because we can both admit to being painfully single. He values the attention I give him, and I value the acceptance of being with a man who accepts me for who I am. What's shocking is that it's more fulfilling than if I had the same situation with a gay man. Some gay men are able to cuddle without an emotional connection but that leaves a bad taste in my mouth. It feels unnatural to feign intimacy if the emotional component isn't there. Sex doesn't make fake intimacy any better either. A gay man could have sex with 100 guys and wonder why he's still thirsty for more. In the case of the bromance, it's more about a mutual connection than about sex.

> "93 percent of male student athletes polled had spooned or cuddled with another guy."

We all need love, intimacy, and acceptance (even if we don't admit it) but you can't find it simply by going to pound town. Male affection isn't something to be laughed at, disgusted by, or feared. Young people need healthy role models to lead emotionally fulfilling lives and the growth of the bromance means that as a society we are moving in the right direction. It means men can now be more expressive instead of stifling emotions, or expressing them through rage, violence and dysfunction.

MORE: *Christian Cintron is a writer, actor and comedian. Find him on Twitter @AbsoluteCintron.*

Dear Diva... SPECIAL

With so many sex apps and online cruise sites, a dick is just a click away. But how do you find Mr Right among the Mr Right-Nows? asked a frustrated reader. So advice diva Robbyne, and the DNA boys pooled their wealth of experience to offer some suggestions for this Dear Diva Special!

DEAR DIVA, I'm a 32-year-old gay male living in Brunswick, Melbourne, and I've been having a hard time with relationships the last few years.

I've been single for 3 or 4 years and I moved to Melbourne a year ago from Sydney as I was fed up with Sydney gays. You talk to a guy online or on an app who is interested in sex. We all love sex and we all know that gays generally meet for sex first. Then maybe a date. Then the possibility of more. But is "more" really a possibility? These are the three types of guys I seemed to meet time again:

1. A guy just looking for sex, nothing more. He doesn't want to know your name, have a proper conversation or know anything about you. Wham, bam, thank you m'am. Sometimes this is all we need, quick sex to satisfy the need… but what if you're looking for something more? Being a gay top in Sydney was never a hard thing. There are plenty of bottoms, so this never will be a problem!

2. A guy who you meet for a drink (or sex) but he fails to tell you that he's in an open relationship and not looking for anything apart from sex. So you just have sex… again! And generally don't know about the relationship part until you ask him to go out again. It's only then he tells you.

3. A guy who you meet but then find out that he's cheating on his partner and everything must be 'discreet'.

Where do you go to actually meet a nice guy for dates? Someone who is looking for the same thing as you: a potential relationship rather than a quick fuck? You certainly don't go to Grindr, Tinder, Squirt, Hornet, Jack'd or Manhunt. Been there, tried that. Plus, it's usually the exact same guys on all the apps.

Instead of an app or website you can go to a gay bar, but what if you're not into the scene? You walk in and everyone looks you up and down like you're fresh meat and decide whether or not they would take you home. It's gross.

I'm not the most attractive guy around, but I'm not the worst looking guy either. Most guys say I'm good-looking. I have my good qualities and my bad. I'm human. I'm a catch. I'm a great guy with great qualities. But where do I meet guys who are looking for the same thing as me: dates and a relationship.

I relocated to Melbourne in 2014 for a fresh start. Left my job, left all my friends and drove down hoping for something better. Instead, I realised that guys, no matter where they are, are likely the same. Where did the days go when we could just be honest, upfront and open with each other about our feelings? I've met guys who seem really cool, who've put in almost as much effort as I have. Then, when I tell them I like them and enjoy their company, they run for the hills.

Maybe it's me who has the relationship issues? Maybe it's me who is too honest and upfront? I'm not the type to tell someone that I love them and want to settle down. I simply tell them I'm looking for something more than a casual relationship.

My questions are: where does a not-so-typical gay guy go to meet the man of his dreams who is looking for something more than a casual fling? Do gays actually go on dates anymore or is that a thing of the past? Does it always have to start with sex or can you just simply go on a date to begin with? Are phone apps the only way to go these days?

I'm lost. I'm on the brink of giving up on the gay world and going straight (again). No, joking, I'm not going back into the closet, but I'm shit-outa-luck. I need advice. *Yours truly,*

Shane Cunningham

DEAR FRUSTRATED, You are obviously tired of the drama and bullshit. But put your chin up and keep hope alive. The dating scene and the phone apps often don't get you what you want. Many people, as you have found, just want a quick piece of tail with no preamble and no postscript. Remember, though, since the dawn of time, long before the Grindrs and Tinders, people have been finding love and good partners. We've become too reliant on the quick fix and the expectation of finding love on a phone app or dating site. These are billion dollar industries making money selling the notion that they can help find your perfect mate from a pool of shady motherfuckers who just want to get their rocks off.

You have to shake off the dust and try something different. Get out of the house and mingle. Try a new gym. Go to a different coffee shop for your morning brew. Finding a good man is work. It requires more effort than typing in a few keystrokes. You have to put on your ruby slippers click your heels, believe in yourself and follow the yellow brick road.

A great way to meet people is in social settings. Meetup.com is a great website where you can find different social groups that you can get involved with and meet like-minds. There are groups in almost every city – gay dads, gay hiking, gay book clubs, et cetera. The people coming to these meet-ups are not there to fuck. They come to meet new friends who share a common interest. Love may just blossom after comparing notes on the latest book club selection, or on a hiking trip where you stop to admire the same wildflower.

Stay positive, forget the past and keep your heart open. The worst thing you can do is hang on to the negativity of your past dating experience and let it turn you into a bitter bitch who turns off Mr Right when he finally comes knocking at your doorstep. – *Robbyne Kaamil, Advice Diva*

I HEAR WHAT you're saying from a lot of gay men! The apps are a blessing and curse. Great for one-offs, not great for meeting Mr Right.

Here's my advice: don't look for a relationship on an app. The basis of a relationship is finding someone you have things in common with. Start by working out what you're interested in – is it a sport, a hobby, an activity? – and join a group that's into the same thing as you. Chances are there's a group of gays who are into what you're into. Don't join the group to find a partner – join the group because you're into what they're into.

Spend some time learning to enjoy your own company. If you're comfortable in your own skin and in your own company you project a confidence that other people find very attractive. But you have to learn to appreciate yourself first. This can be a bit confronting. – *Andrew Creagh, DNA Founding Editor*

MY FIRST PIECE of advice is stop feeling sorry for yourself. I promise you, almost every gay guy has gone through this before and you're not alone. Heck, even Ian Thorpe says it's hard to gay-date and he's a good-looking celebrity with tons of cash!

The majority of the gay guys I know in Sydney aren't meeting for sex first. Most of them are looking for "the more" that you suggest isn't possible. Oh, and I didn't meet them in gay bars or through hook-up apps. There's way more to the gay scene than that.

Are you a gaymer? Do you like camping? Movies? Meditation? Singing? Sports? Art? There are heaps of groups (both online and in the real world) that focus on these interests and not hooking up. Check them out. Do some research. Type some words into Facebook or Google. You may be surprised with what you find. Even if you're meeting people that only end up as mates, it could still lead you to your Prince Charming.

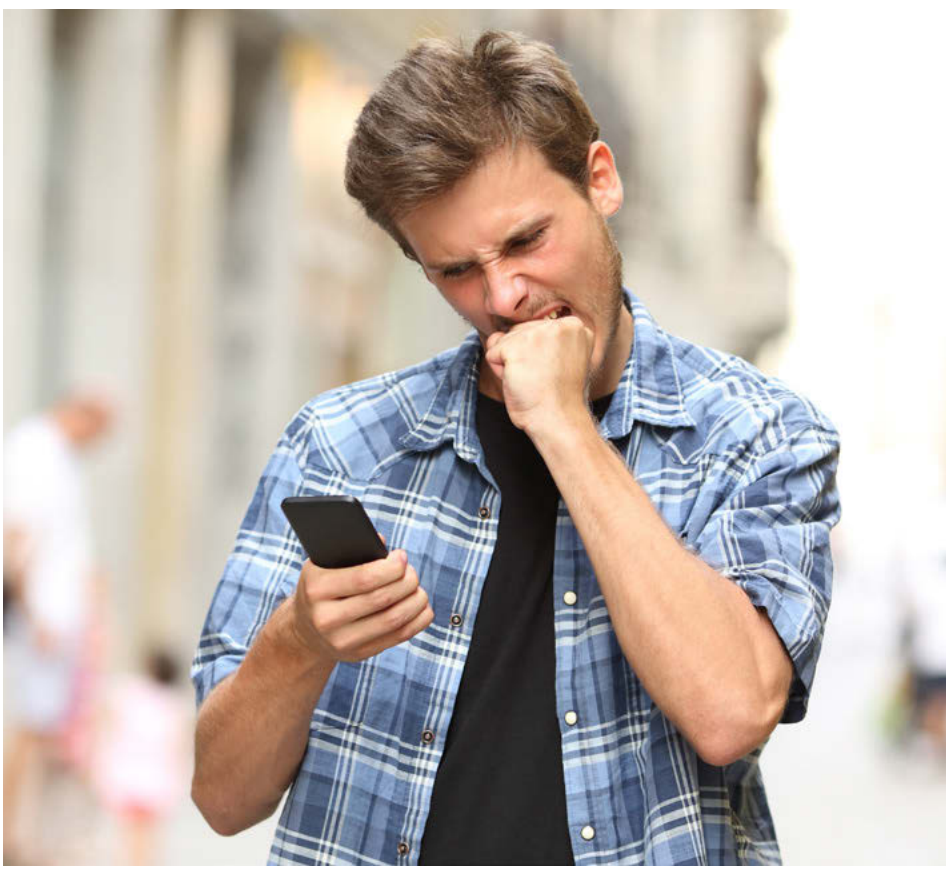
You ask if phone apps are the way to go and I think you've already answered your own question. They work for some people but if they're getting you down – so much so that you've relocated to a different city – then it's time to ditch them. I did and I feel so much happier in myself. Yes, it's harder to meet gay guys and you've got to put in some effort, but that's half the fun. Making a Grindr profile isn't putting in any effort: it's lazy. It took me deleting my profile to realise that.

Guys really do still go on dates and there are plenty of fellas out there looking for something more than fast sex. Have fun with it all. Finding love is meant to be exciting. Don't make it a chore. *– Phillip Portman, DNA Online Coordinator*

"Since the dawn of time, long before the Grindrs and Tinders, people have been finding love and good partners."

DATING IS MEANT to be casual, not calculated. Men are running away because the scent of your desperation is repellant. Even if you aren't declaring love after 20 minutes, the overpowering whiff of your tone, vibe and demeanor will tell them you're a desperately seeking Susan. There is nothing attractive about that.

But why ask for advice when you've got it all figured out? You paint apps, bars, entire cities, and all gay men in a broad black-and-white that shuts the door to further discovery. These aren't mere observations you're making, they're judgments. You sent this same epic whinge to several gay outlets, presumably to validate these judgments. Rather than seeking affirmation that you're correct, that you're the only nice "not-so typical" guy on the planet who's looking for that missing other half to complete you, here's an idea: complete yourself.



You claim to be a top but behave as a total submissive, allowing the idea of a boyfriend to dictate your entire life. The place you live, your job, your friends, all of these realities fall far behind a fantasy "man of your dreams". You've fled everything in hopes of greener marital grass. Who does this? And what man could possibly live up to all that you've sacrificed?

This is the plot of some 19th Century female melodrama. It suggests you are very insecure. Are you that unacceptable on your own? Start by learning to love being single. Love your friends and your life and love it so much that you wouldn't trade it for anything except to be together with a person who makes you feel even better than you already do as a single man.

Want to avoid the types of men you listed? Be assertive and insist on what you're looking for (and everything you're not looking for) right up front on your Grindr profile. Make it clear from the start that you're looking for single men and potential relationships only – and confirm this in a chat before meeting up for more disappointment.

You took considerable time to pen a 1,000-word indictment on other gay men. Is this what you talk about on dates? You will struggle less if you spent that much time on some personal accounting. Figure out just who you are and what you're about rather than why some elusive man hasn't materialized. Put away your microscope, pick up a mirror, and he might just appear. *– Jesse Archer, DNA Features Editor*

IN 2010, Peter Backus used mathematics to work out the the number of girlfriends that would be suitable for him in the UK. His equation looked at the total number of women in the country, then certain preferences were applied such as the number of women located in London, the number of "age-appropriate" women; those who he would find attractive and then those who would find him attractive. He found that of the 30 million women in the UK, only 26 would be suitable.

Now apply this equation to your preferences (Melbourne, gay, single, age range, bottom only) and your chances on finding love will be close to zero. If you base your potential perfect mate on one image, a few stats and a headline (which is all the gay dating apps allow), you will forever be single. Time to look past the apps, time to look past the ideal images of the perfect man and start seeing the rich, complicated beautiful tapestry that is another person.

Also, a word of advice. You will find that slut-shaming others is a major turn off to most guys and a sign of one's own insecurities. *– Jared Simpson, DNA Advertising Manager* ★

MORE: *Robbyne Kaamil is a relationship expert on TV, radio, and Playgirl.com. Find her on FB, Twitter @theadvicediva, and email confidential Dear Diva questions to: asktheadvicediva@gmail.com*

Son Of A Preacher Man

» He was once in a sucking competition with a flight attendant? Er, exactly how straight is this month's Straight Mate, actor **Ian Stenlake**?

DNA: You play band manager John Ashby in *Georgie Girl: The Seekers Musical.* Tell us about the show and your character.
Ian Stenlake: The show is set in London during the swinging '60s. John knew his way around the music industry and loved life and partying, but they weren't drinking and drug-taking kind of parties, he just loved being around people. So I dare say he remembers everything from that period, which is unusual [laughs]!
From an Australian viewpoint, how would you describe The Seekers phenomenon? The word phenomenon is a good one. These were four young Australians who found themselves in London and became not just the flavour of the month, but lasted for a few years. But like most international successes, it all suddenly stops. I didn't know why that happened but in the show we find out.
Do you believe in method acting? I totally believe in method acting, however, from my personal experience I realise that you also have to stay safe. There's no point in going method if you can't get up and go to work the next day. When I was on *Stingers* [Aussie TV show] my character was beaten and ended up on life support. I spent a couple of days in a hospital bed investing in that whole work. But for several weeks after, I had a muscular spasm in my stomach that wouldn't go away! It made me think, *Why put yourself through all that pain when you can just act?* But in order to achieve the most thrilling performances, it does cost you something emotionally and you literally have to bring yourself back.
Have you ever tackled a gay role? I've certainly kissed a guy on stage and I played Cliff Bradshaw in *Cabaret* and he was healthily ambiguous! But I haven't played any iconic gay roles – yet.
You've long been passionate about gay rights. Things have certainly shifted in the ten years since we last did this interview. Yes. It's been very interesting to watch gay marriage unfold around the world, and I don't often post current affairs on social media, but I did post how ashamed I was of Australia. Countries like Ireland are ahead of us, and the USA? Hello? I hate to think of it as a competition, but to lose to the USA is very embarrassing! There are definitely some dinosaurs in our parliament and they have become bloody roadblocks. It's actually quite inspiring to listen to some of the American politicians and judges who are putting forward the argument for why gay marriage is common sense. It is very much like racial discrimination, especially the way America has moved through it.
Last time you also spoke about your best gay mates Bille Brown and Michael Cormick. Yes, since then my wife Rachael and I split up, but she and Michael are performing together in *Next To Normal* in Perth. Michael was Maid Of Honour at our wedding and is Fairy Godmother to our children [laughs]. Bille was my Best Man, but unfortunately he died. It was a big loss as he was my best friend and mentor. No one knew he was also doing chemotherapy to fight bowel cancer. It's weird when in your life you lose a contact who is a 'go-to' person. I always knew I could pick up the phone and call Bille.
Would you still turn gay for Orlando Bloom? He's too old for me now [laughs]. Actually, he's been off the radar for a bit. Maybe I'll change to Johnny Depp, he's got a bit of swagger, though he may have gone a bit mad. One would say gone to the dogs!
What's the campest song on your playlist? I love ABBA. Back in 1975 when I was living in Mackay, Queensland, I was besotted with them. My father is a minister, so we lived next to a church and underneath the house I played ABBA *Arrival* at full tilt! My dad used to come and tell me to shut up because I was disrupting his service! I had a very vivid dream back then too, that Frida and Benny were my parents.
From a straight mate perspective, what do you think you 'get' about gay people that others don't? My introduction and education toward acceptance came along a path where, in my adolescence, through being ill-informed and in the environment I was in, I actually would have fallen into the homophobic group. So when I became an actor at 21, I was enlightened in a very positive way. I fondly recall my first job in a spoof musical called *Phantoad Of The Opera*. There were a lot of actors and dancers rehearsing and I spontaneously sang quite loudly, "There is nothing like a dame" and then a large hand landed on my shoulder and a breathy hot mouth in my ear said, "You wouldn't know!" I felt quite welcomed. I think when people grow up straight and homophobic it's something about being riddled with fear. Fear of the unknown. People should just try and have a conversation. Gay people won't bite… well not unless you invite them to!

> "I hate to think of gay marriage as a competition, but to lose to the USA is very embarrassing!"

Speaking of biting, you got quite excited with the return of Australia's favourite chocolate, the Polly Waffle. Yes, in 1995 I came second in a Polly Waffle sucking contest at the Newtown Hotel! I was edged out by a particularly handsome flight attendant who just seemed to know his way around a waffle better than I. It was truly a jaw-inspiring experience!
In the past you have described the trauma of wearing a dance belt. Oh yeah! The best part about those things is taking them off. This is probably quite out of line, but childbirth can be horrendous and painful, but in most cases you will just remember the good bits, and I think when you peel off the thong, it also erases the bad memories. In fact you find yourself thinking, "I could almost do this again!" ★

MORE: *Georgy Girl: The Seekers Musical is playing at Her Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne. Visit www.georgygirlthemusical.com. Find Matthew on Twitter @Mattmyers1964.*

LEAD PHOTO AND BACKSTAGE PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICHOLAS CONTRERA. LA SHOW PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAGNUS HASTINGS.

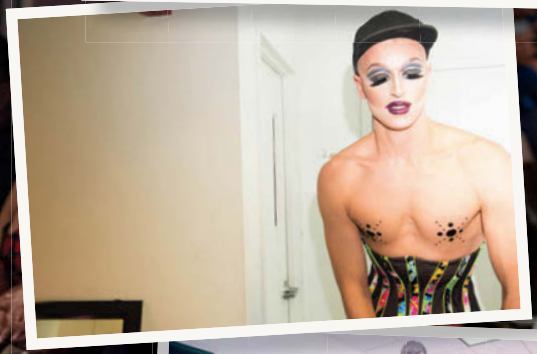
The Marco Marco Show!

IT WAS A TWO-PART fashion extravaganza that spanned a continent, with New York and LA Fashion Week shows. Marco Marco's dazzling, fluoro underwear-as-outerwear range makes for a striking catwalk show anywhere.

Designer and creative director Marco Morante injected a variety of differently shaped and gendered models into his 2016 launch including porn star Boomer Banks, *Drag Race* lovelies Sharon Needles and Shangela, and the likes of Steven Dehler and DNA cover boy, Stefan Brydon.

Marco is currently the go-to guy for the flash-pop crowd, designing costumes for Britney's *Piece Of Me* Las Vegas residency and Katy Perry's cupcake bra top. His flashy-and-trashy threads are seen on the backs of CeeLo Green, Justin Bieber and Adam Lambert.

MARCOMARCO



MARCOMARCO

SO LONG 2015 AND THANKS FOR EVERYTHING

It was a year of monumental victories and heartbreaking injustices for the LGBTI world. Jesse Matheson looks back with wonder – and contempt where merited – on the people and events that shaped our very busy year.

IT WAS A YEAR OF CONTRASTS. Enormous wins and terrible losses. The year love prevailed on one side of the world and died on another. Of celebration, defeat and, of course, the year we finally saw Justin Bieber's schlong – affectionally named Jerry by his fans.

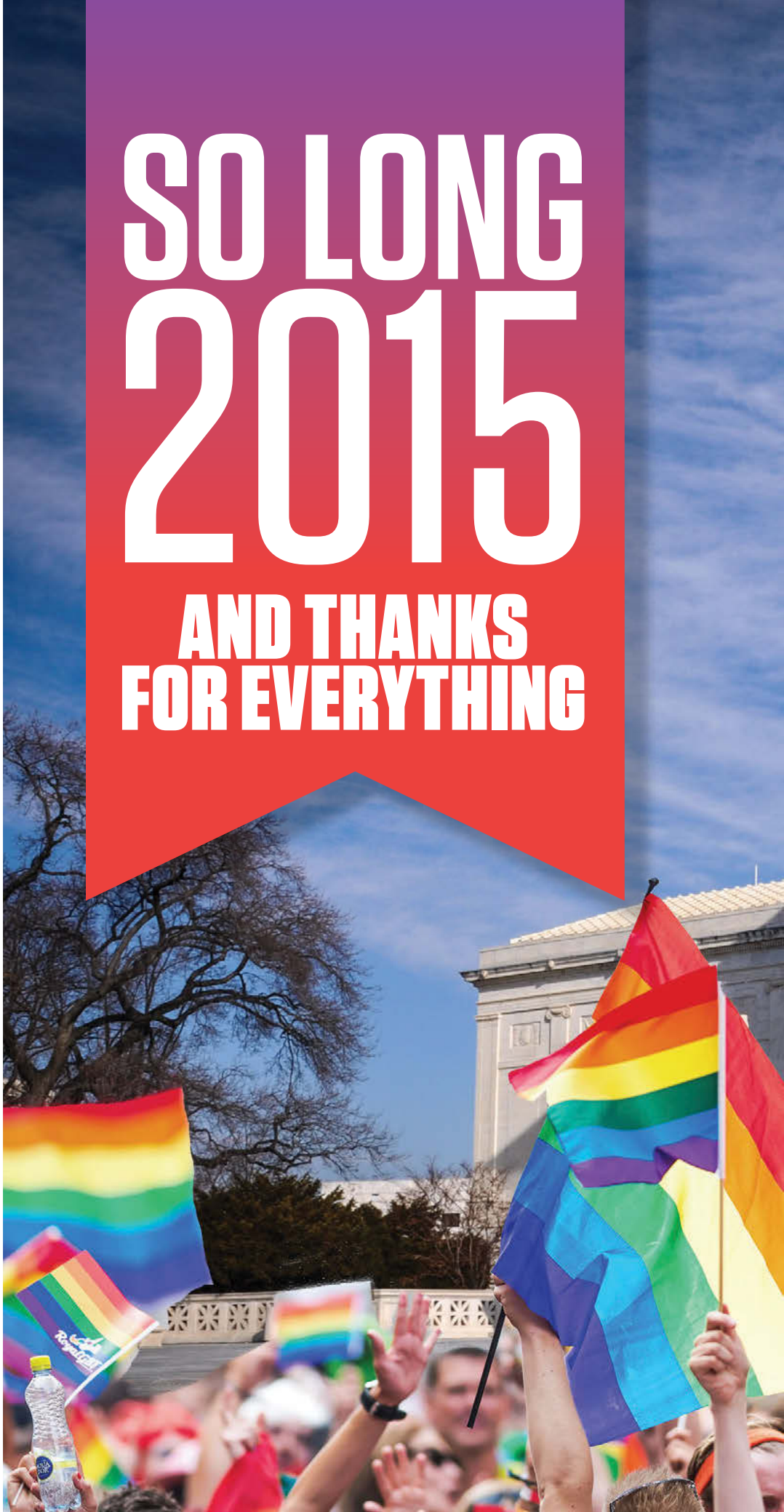
It was the year it became fashionable for world leaders to openly support LGBT issues including, but not limited to, same-sex marriage. Obama, Hillary Clinton, Julia Gillard and Australia's latest new Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, suddenly, and coincidentally, decided now was the time to act.

This was the year that tested boundaries and broke them with sports stars coming out *en masse* and the rising phenomena of heterosexual men giving each other blowjobs (or "bro jobs", because why the hell not?).

2015 was a year of intense momentum that some may look back on with happiness or pain.

So pull up a stool and shake up some Cosmos, this one's a doozy: One of the greatest moments in LGBT history occurred this year in June when the Supreme Court of the United States legalised same-sex marriage across the nation. I woke up on that day, read the headline, looked out the window and thought, it really is a new age. The US followed in the footsteps of Ireland and Luxembourg, who had earlier in the year acted on marriage equality. There are now 21 countries where gay marriage is legal.

Australia, however, is not one of them. The long journey to equality is stalled behind a battleline drawn in the sand by former, now very much irrelevant, Prime Minister Tony Abbott. Thanks to his damaging, albeit short-lived government, a "plebiscite" [public vote] on same-sex marriage awaits on the horizon of 2016. Ominous. >>



A sea of rainbows as the Supreme Court legalises same-sex marriage across the USA.

PrEP.

ON ANOTHER FRONT, in just 12 months the promising pill-a-day treatment PrEP revolutionised how we approach the fight against HIV. Studies showing a 100 perecnt success rate in stopping transmission of HIV have led scientists and activists alike to proclaim PrEP our greatest weapon since condoms in combatting the spread of a disease that has wreaked havoc on our community. Optimism, however, is slightly premature. PrEP remains prohibitively expensive to most, and the drop-off in condom use has seen STI nasties like syphilis and gonorrhea come gallopping back in drug resistant strains, in some cases. Nevertheless, an HIV cure has never felt so close.

CONTINUING THIS UPLIFTING trend, 2015 is also the year transgender issues came to the fore of the mainstream psyche thanks to the transition of Bruce to Caitlyn Jenner.

Much as you might dislike the Kardashian clan and, let's be honest, no one would blame you, it's hard to deny that her transition has changed the way we talk about trans issues forever – and for the better!

Firstly, did you see that *Vanity Fair* cover? Damn, Mumma can work it! And she's 66 years old, wow! Just as *Orange Is The New Black* star Laverne Cox made history as the first transgender actor to be nominated for an Emmy in 2014, Jenner's transition, the most public in history, moved hearts, minds and souls and, more importantly, started conversations. It was iconic.

That conversation became rather loud and rowdy at Oak Park High School in Kansas City, Missouri. Students there overwhelmingly elected their transsexual classmate Landon Patterson as Homecoming Queen. When those sad, twisted folk from the Westboro Baptist Church found out, they attempted to stage a protest outside the school. But the Oak Park High kids were having none of it. A large counter-rally spontaneously morphed into being and the students, chanting "Long live the queen!" had the Westboros fleeing down the street. Find it on YouTube. It's worth a look.

WITH 2015'S towering highs, however, came equally deep lows.

As the West celebrated its victories, the East was thrown back into the Dark Ages, suffering at the hands of ISIS and religious extremism. In August, the UN reported "at least" 30 people had been murdered by ISIS, many of them publicly tossed from the roofs of tall buildings, for the crime of being gay. How many have actually died we will never know. It's a depressing, yet stark reminder that even with immense battles won, for the international community, the war is far from over.

ISIS kills gays.

Days after the US legalised same-sex marriage, innocent pride marchers in Turkey were fired upon with water cannons and rubber pellets due to them celebrating and protesting during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

In Indonesia, just a hop, skip and a jump from Australia, the predominantly Muslim province of Aceh, which is allowed to implement parts of Sharia law, introduced anti-gay measures which punish those found having homosexual sex with up to 100 lashes.

The religious persecution of gay people – including torture and execution – was brought to the attention of the United Nations by Syrian refugee Subhi Nahas, who addressed the Security Council on the subject in October.

THEN THERE was the story of the County Clerk from the state of Kentucky, Kim Davis. The homophobic Jesus warrior refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples even though it was law and, in fact, her job.

For her trouble, Davis found herself in jail on

Caitlyn Jenner.

Kim Davis.

Davis, the homophobic Jesus warrior, refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples even though it became law.

contempt of court charges, giving the gay world a healthy dose of *schadenfreude*, but rallying religious fanatics to her cause.

At the time of writing, Davis continues her clownish crusade in the courts even though she's lost every time she's come before them. It's also difficult for her to occupy the moral high ground when it comes to the institution of marriage – she's three-times divorced with two children out of wedlock.

She is, unfortunately, out of jail now.

LET'S LIGHTEN THE MOOD A BIT, shall we? 2015 was the year sport totally came out of the gym closet, jockstraps and all! So many athletes and sportspeople came out this year it would be impractical, and boring, to name them all.

Olympian skier Gus Kenworthy slid down the slopes and into our hearts when he came out in October. Boxing champion Yusaf Mack took a media beating for appearing in gay porn and then saying he didn't remember it and must have been drugged. Finally, he came out with the truth. Mack repeated a sentiment we hear all too often from LGBT sportspeople: "I'm tired of holding it in, it is what it is. I live my life. I'm gay. It was all a lie to try to cover myself up." Welcome home, Mack! One of us, one of us.

American figure skater Adam Rippon and British rugby star Keegan Hirst also came out as gay, and world champion bodybuilder Janae Marie Krok as transgender.

On the showbiz side of sport, Matt "Money" Cage, a pro wrestler, announced on Facebook: "I spent the majority of my life lying, hiding and depressed because I felt like I couldn't truly be who I wanted to be and live freely as I saw fit… I had to act and that's not me. I, nor anyone else, should have to do that."

This was also the year that out Aussie rugby player-turned-bobsledder champ Simon Dunn's beard, sporting prowess and selfie addiction saw him become a sex symbol and worldwide phenomenon.

LGBT SPORTING individuals were also the recipient of a number of awards.

Finnish swimmer Ari-Pekka Liukkonen was dubbed Finland's Sports Role Model Of The Year in January for coming out ahead of the Sochi Winter Olympics as an act of solidarity with LGBTI people persecuted in Russia.

Notably, Caitlyn Jenner won the >>

Gus Kenworthy.

SEE MORE

Keegan Hirst.

Ari-Pekka Liukkonen.

Ruby Rose.

>> Arthur Ashe Courage award at the ESPYs, telling a room full of some of the world's most accomplished sports stars, "Trans people deserve something vital, they deserve your respect."

And perhaps proving homophobia in sports is finally on its way out, protestors are now calling for the 2017 Super Bowl football game to be moved out of Houston, Texas, after that city repealed anti-discrimination laws protecting LGBT people and other minorities.

IN THE CELEBRITY WORLD, Miley Cyrus became a true gay icon by creating the homeless LGBT youth charity, the Happy Hippie Foundation, performing at the VMAs with *RuPaul's Drag Race* queens, and raising funds for people living with HIV/AIDS through MAC Cosmetic's Viva Glam project. Oh, she also admitted that not all of her relationships have been "totally straight". Whether you like her twerking or not, Miley's gay game was on point this year. Bravo.

Australian actress, TV host and DJ Ruby Rose appeared as an androgynous inmate in *Orange Is The New Black* and introduced the world to modern gender fluidity while making men and women, gay and straight, question their sexuality.

Love was in the air for the ubiquitous Stephen Fry and fellow comedian Elliott Spencer, who married in February and had the village gossips tsk-tsk-ing about their 30-year age difference. British Olympic diver Tom Daley and screenwriter Lance Dustin Black announced their engagement in October with less controversy – there's only a 20-year age gap between them.

Both Charlie Sheen (*Two And A Half Men*) and Danny Pintauro (*Who's The Boss?*) made celebrity headlines with announcements about their HIV-positive status. Tellingly, both associate becoming HIV-positive with out-of-control drug addiction. Celebrity website *TMZ* ruthlessly led the charge against Sheen, reveling in his misfortune and slut-shaming. They also revealed that they didn't understand the difference between having detectable and undetectable viral loads. Possibly that's a good conversation to come from the whole sad episode.

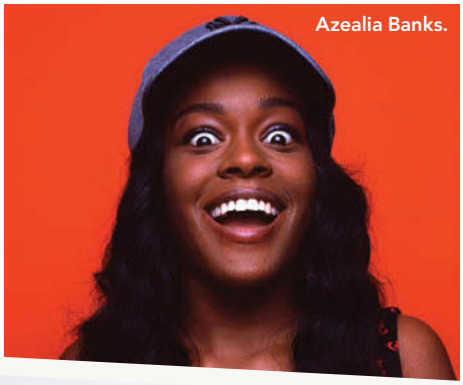
Gay boys made it big in the music world this year too with UK singer Sam Smith dominating the charts, winning four Grammy awards and penning the hit theme, *Writing's On The Wall,* for the James Bond film *Spectre.*South African-born Australian singer, YouTube star and glorious twink, Troye Sivan also made waves all over the world with hit singles *Wild* and *Talk Me Down*, from his album, *Blue Neighbourhood.*

Stephen Fry and Elliott Spencer had the village gossips tsk-tsk-ing about their 30-year age gap.

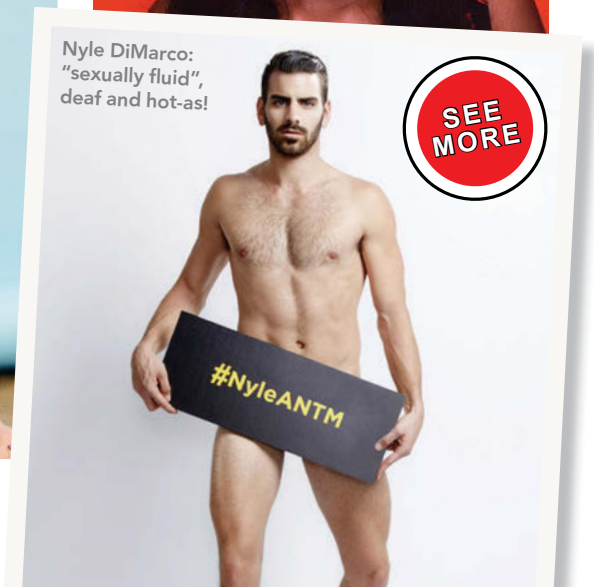
Strangely, gay favs Beyonce and Britney Spears stepped out of the limelight this year. Let's hope 2016 has more in store for these queens of pop. Lady Gaga also had an uncharacteristically quiet year but wowed the Academy and Julia Andrews with her *Sound Of Music* tribute performance at the Oscars; she also turned heads by starring in *American Horror Story: Hotel* as the ghoulish Countess. Madonna hit the road on her *Rebel Heart* world tour, where in Stockholm she stopped the show with a powerful speech condemning the Paris terrorist attacks.

But one pop star was really hard to forget this year, even if you tried: Azealia Banks. For reasons unknown, Banks continued her tirade (crusade?) against her own career by spitting in the face of an airline host and calling him a faggot. The incident allegedly started because someone cut in front of her on a plane. She later blamed everything on the gay mafia so take from that what you will…

IN OTHER NOTABLE outings, America's Next Top Model hottie Nyle DiMarco (who also happens to be deaf) described himself as "sexually fluid". Jussie Smollett who plays Jamal Lyon on *Empire* came out, as did Randy Thomas, the one-time head of Exodus International (the infamous "pray the gay away" organisation) and, making quite a splash on social media were twins Aaron and Austin Rhodes. Their dual "Dad, we're gay" video weren't viral and they ended up on *Ellen* – with their dad! Ahhh.


Azealia Banks.

Miley Cyrus.



Nyle DiMarco: "sexually fluid", deaf and hot-as!

SEE MORE

Waylon Smithers.

DELVING DEEPER into pop culture, *The Simpsons* character Waylon Smithers finally came out as gay. It only took him 26 years. As did Ice Man from the *X-Men* comic series, giving an icy new meaning to Netflix and chill. Get it? Ice Man. Chill.

AUSTRALIA'S GAY CINEMA added another blockbuster to its storied history with *Holding The Man*, an adaptation of Tim Conigrave's heartbreaking memoir in the age of AIDS. The film received critical acclaim and has been nominated for six Australian Academy Of Cinema And Television Arts Awards.

LGBT cinema also took a negative hit as the Stonewall riots received its first big Hollywood adaptation – which can only be described as disastrous. Not only was the film, *Stonewall*, directed by the openly gay Roland Emmerich, a financial failure, it was accused of blatantly white-washing history by removing important non-white historical figures to focus on a fictional white All-American hero.

Freeheld, based on a true story, starred Julianne Moore and Ellen Page as a gay couple searching for social justice as Moore's character succumbed to cancer. Not a dry eye in the house! Meanwhile, Cate Blanchett convincingly played gay-lady-trapped-in-the-1950s in *Carol*. Oscar buzz!

IN OTHER NEWS, and I really mean *other news*, lawmakers from Tennessee's Blount County actually voted on a resolution which begged God for mercy for being forced to solemnise same-sex marriages. Called the *Resolution Condemning Judicial Tyranny And Petitioning God's Mercy*, it reads (and this is completely serious by the way): "We adopt this Resolution before God that He pass us by in His Coming Wrath and not destroy our County as He did Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring cities. As the Passover Lamb was a means of salvation to the ancient Children of Israel, so we stand upon the safety of the Lamb of God to save us."

Totally and utterly insane. Luckily, in what might actually give you faith in God, the resolution was unanimously voted down.

Elsewhere, Roman Catholic priest, Monsignor Krzysztof Charamsa, announced that not only was he gay, he had a partner! Bravely, he made his announcement at the opening of a Vatican synod on family issues. Predictably, he was fired.

FINALLY, in a sign that we are truly entering a new phase in sexual freedom and diverse sexuality, a recent study has found heterosexual men are giving each other blow jobs. Written by Dr Jane Ward, Associate Professor of Women's Studies at the University Of California, the study found that men are giving each other "bro jobs", but not as an expression of homosexuality.

In fact, quite the contrary. They're doing it to prove their "straightness". Whatever the reason they're doing it, I've got to ask, where were these boys during my high school days?!

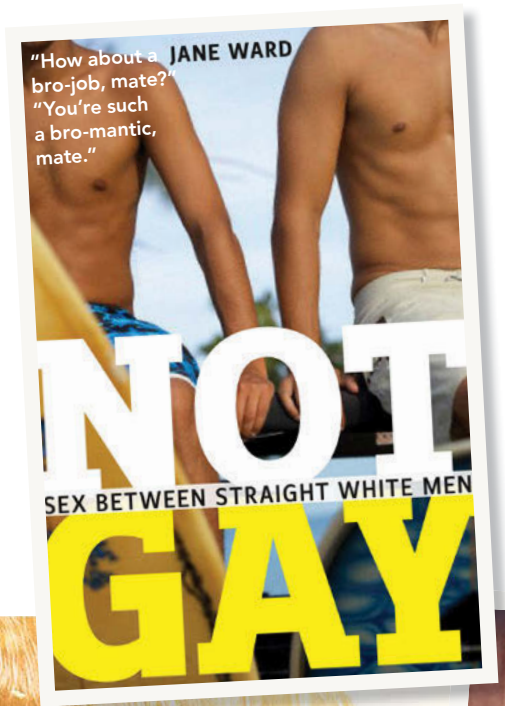
FOR THOSE beneath the LGBT umbrella, a new year doesn't mean the closing of a chapter. It's not an end nor a beginning, but the continuation of an ongoing adventure.

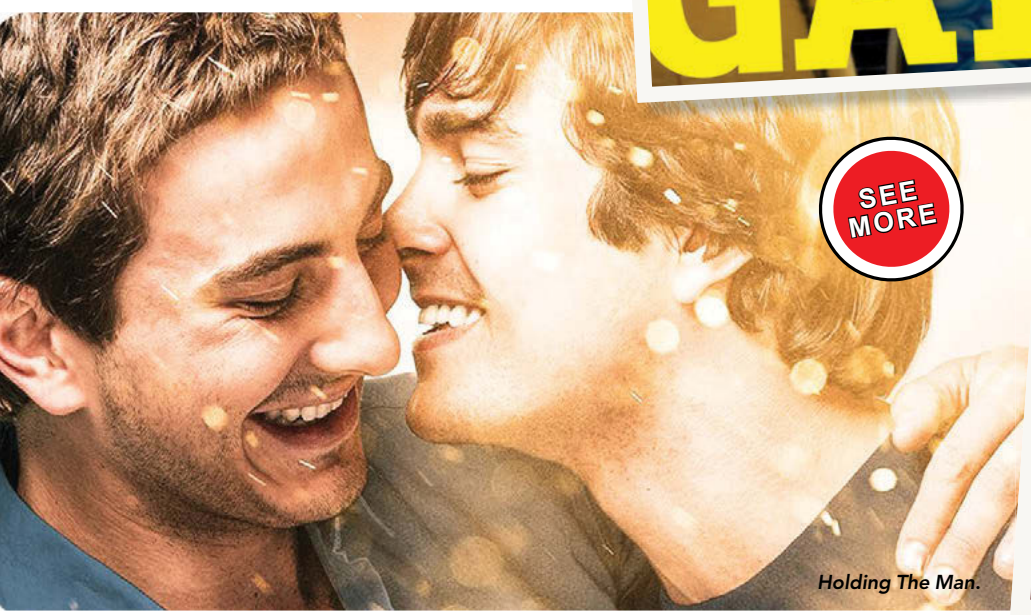
Every year we as a community face new battles, new laws, heroes and villains. We take comfort in victories as compensation for the losses, and we do it year after year.

Australia is entering a decisive year in which the general public may well vote on equality. Activists fear this may turn Australia into a battleground, bringing hate speech to the surface under the guise of moderate opposition.

2016 may also herald a more widespread availability of PrEP, a greater representation of LGBT individuals in sports and the arts and maybe, just maybe, those around the world who are being persecuted will find some solace.

Until then, we'll at least have Bieber's dick pics. ★




Holding The Man.

SEE MORE

Introducing Jerry, also known as Justin Bieber's penis.

Gays Gone Wild

Adam Lambert live: channeling Freddie Mercury and George Michael.

2015: The Year In Music

Pop-star gays locking lips, a love song to James Bond, and a music video in a sauna. **It was a big year for gay music**, writes Marc Andrews.

2015 WAS A BANNER year for out-and-proud music. There's been nothing like it since 1984. In that year, a band featuring a leather queen topped the charts with a dirty ditty about orgasms (Frankie Goes To Hollywood's *Relax*), a gender-bender had the biggest dance hit (Dead Or Alive's *You Spin Me Round Like A Record*), and a trio of boys shouted about gay love and homophobic abuse and hit the top ten twice (Bronski Beat with *Smalltown Boy* and *Why).*

Thirty years later and it's happening all over again, with openly gay artists being not just accepted but warmly embraced by the mainstream. To see Troye Sivan, barely out of his teens, proudly declaring to DNA that his coming out was "the most important thing I've done in my life, publicly and personally" is era-defining. That his *Wild* EP went to #1 in 41 countries, got him the professional attention of the world's biggest pop star (Taylor Swift) and accorded him a mention in *Time* magazine's "Most Influential Teenagers" list only solidifies the positive impact he has made.

While the pop charts (backed by his huge social media army) pushed Troye to the front of the pack, radio support for his music is noticeably lacking. He might be one artist too hard to pigeonhole for radio programmers unwilling to take too many chances when they have corporate mouths to feed.

That said, there's been no such issue with the year's biggest seller (pre-Adele, of course), 23-year-old Sam Smith. At first the crooner chose to make his sexuality a non-issue until finally it warranted addressing and he came out, quietly, and that was that. No big deal. Most notably, Sam laid his gay heart bare when he won an armful of Grammys for his debut album, *In The Lonely Hour.* Much as the aforementioned Adele turned her heartbreak into cash, on his historic win Sam told the global audience: "I would like to thank the man who this album is about. Thank you so much for breaking my heart, because you got me four Grammys!"

But Sam wasn't done. He wrote and performed the theme song for arguably the most heterosexual of film franchises – James Bond. His ballad, *Writing's On The Wall*, for the *Spectre* installment, became the first 007 theme song to go to #1 in the UK. That same month, he scored the most consecutive weeks in the UK top ten by a debut album. What no one seemed to find unusual, or worth commenting on, is that Sam's gorgeous anthem appears to be a love song to James Bond. Perhaps a "sexually fluid" James Bond is only one James Franco away? We can but hope.

Some of 2015's biggest gay truth-tellers in the musical sense were 33-year-old Adam Lambert and 47-year-old John Grant. *Ghost Town* was a chart-topper for Adam and his third album, *The Original High*, hit the top ten after he took a break from working with the surviving members of legendary rock band Queen, who view him as Freddie Mercury's natural successor. John Grant, meanwhile, continued to be a critics darling – and to broaden his commercial appeal, too – with the release of his third solo album, *Grey Tickles, Black Pressure*. Singing openly about gay love and his HIV-positive status, John also introduced more dark humour into

his work with the video for the album's first single, *Disappointing*, featuring him swanning around a gay sauna with a mini-birthday cake surrounded by men in nothing but towels. The most controversial thing about this was that it wasn't controversial. Outlets like *The Guardian* and *NME* were full of acclaim for his avant-garde pop.

He wasn't the only one in that field as Perfume Genius (Mike Hadreas on his driver's licence) also scored success with the late 2014 album *Too Bright* which chronicled his gay life, his struggle with Crohn's disease and a love for – guess what? – '80s pop that put Taylor Swift's *1989* to shame.

Holding The Man, a bold Australian feature film about young gay love in the age of AIDS featured a fine soundtrack of '70s and '80s classics, while two *Say Yes To Love* compilations from Aussie artists advocated marriage equality.

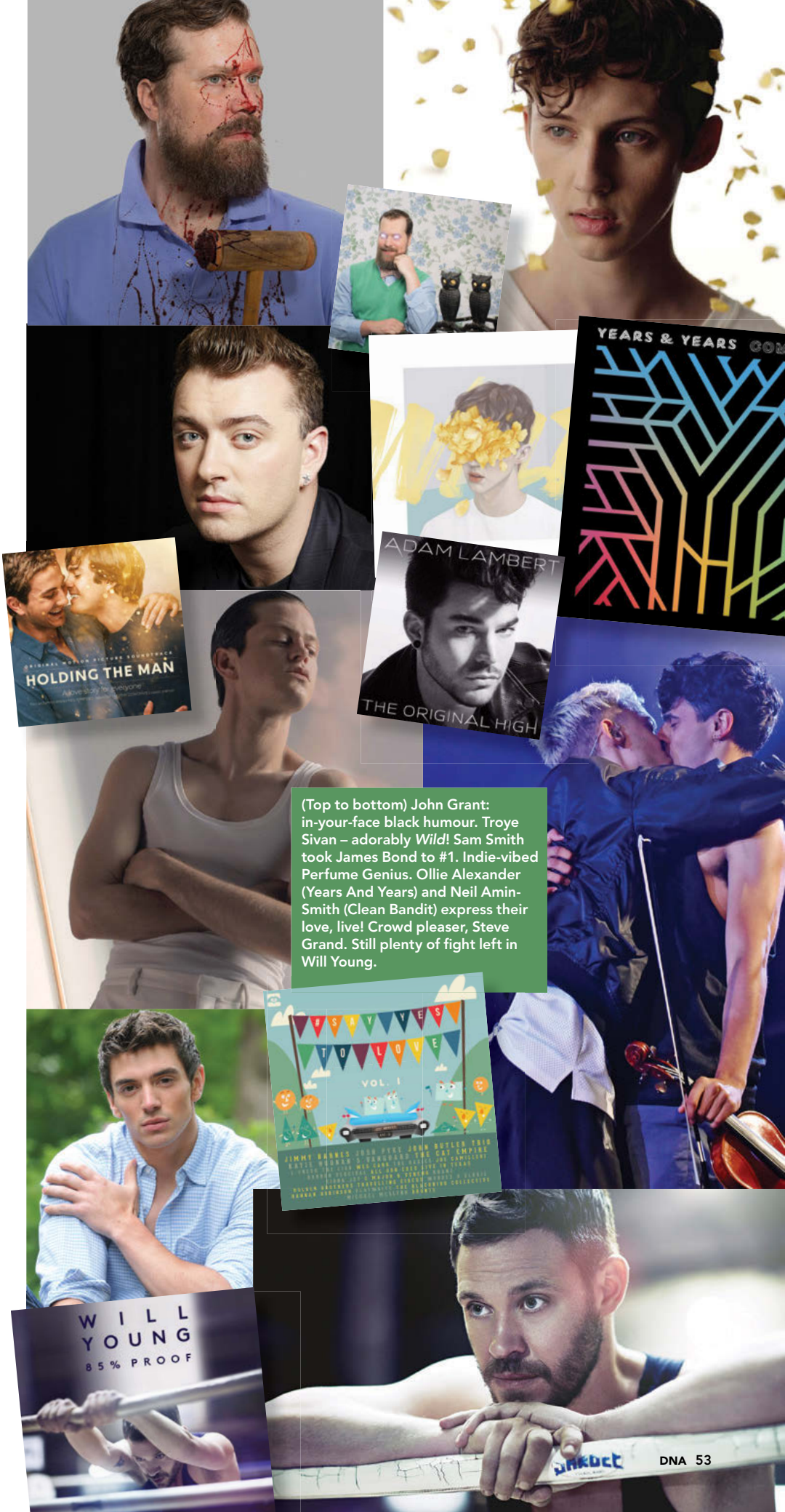
Two former DNA cover stars furthered their music careers with Steve Grand funding his first studio album, *All-American Boy*, through his fans on Kickstarter, and Willie Gomez posting a video of himself belting out a spine-tingling blues ballad on Facebook.

In May, former UK *Pop Idol* winner Will Young rocketed back to the top of the UK

> **What no one seemed to find unusual is that Sam's anthem is a love song to James Bond.**

album charts with *85% Proof*, his first album in four years. Nobody told Will or Adam Lambert that TV talent show acts can't expect to last!

There was one story, which, perhaps more than any other, shows how far we've come since 1984 when Bronski Beat sang, "Contempt in your eyes as I turn to kiss his lips" in *Why*. In 2015 two gay men openly declared their love for each other with a kiss in front of hundreds of fans (and thousands on social media), and all was reported positively in the media. These two pop stars – Years & Years' lead singer Ollie Alexander and Clean Bandit's handsome violinist Neil Amin-Smith – locked lips on stage in the year's most defining moment for gay love and the fight for equal rights. Finally, pop music has its own gay couple and the world will never again be the same. 2016, you have a lot to live up to. Go for it! ★



(Top to bottom) John Grant: in-your-face black humour. Troye Sivan – adorably *Wild*! Sam Smith took James Bond to #1. Indie-vibed Perfume Genius. Ollie Alexander (Years And Years) and Neil Amin-Smith (Clean Bandit) express their love, live! Crowd pleaser, Steve Grand. Still plenty of fight left in Will Young.

Everybody Needs Good Neighbours

Matt Wilson burst onto our screens this year as gay stripper Aaron Brennan in long-running Aussie soap, *Neighbours*. While shooting the DNA cover, he sat down with Phillip Portman to talk about kissing scenes, his career as an aussieBum model, and how he prepared for his role as Ramsay Street's exotic dancer.

PHOTOGRAPHY CHRISTIAN SCOTT (STUDIO CHRISTIAN SCOTT)

Matt wears 2Eros.

DNA: How did you score the role of Aaron Brennan, Ramsay Street's stripping gay?
Matt Wilson: I actually went for an audition for Tyler that I didn't get, but I suited some of the traits they wanted in the middle brother, Aaron. It was only late last year that I was told that I got the role and started filming around Easter this year.
***Neighbours* fans first met Aaron while he was stripping at one of Sheila's bingo events. That's a pretty memorable first scene. Talk us through it.** That was one of my first scenes. When you start at a new job, you're nervous because there's all new people that you don't know; you don't know their names, you don't know how the hierarchy works. And I was nervous about starting a brand new career as well – I went from working in the building industry to working full-time as an actor. Then I had to strip in front of all these extras and a director and there were cameras everywhere [laughs].
Is it true you watched *Magic Mike* a ridiculous amount of times to prepare for the role? It sure is. I started to do a bit of research on him. I watched all the *Thunder From Down Under* guys. One of my mates is actually in it. He's like, the main guy. I knew a bit about how his lifestyle worked, and then I watched *Magic Mike* just to see. Like, the eyes they give on stage and stuff like that. Obviously I had to tone it down a bit for the G rating! But I reckon I watched it about four times.
What's it like to play a gay character on one of Australia's most loved soaps? It's great. I think I get more attention than anybody. There's so much support for Aaron. When you first air in Australia you get all these reactions on social media and it's all positive. I've been warned about the negative stuff that's going to come in but it hasn't happened.
That's great! So, you haven't experienced any trolling since taking on the role? Somebody trolled me about the types of shoes I wore, but that's not going to worry me!
Do you feel a responsibility to the gay community when playing Aaron? It's an awesome opportunity to be playing the character, and I've had people tweet me from the UK saying they're so happy that Aaron has existed on television because it's made them feel more confident in their own day-to-day lives. They're the messages that you don't delete because they make you feel really good. It's good to know that it's a reciprocal thing.
We're happy a gay character has had a positive reaction. The way I try to play Aaron is he's not a bloke but he's not super flamboyant like Cameron Tucker on *Modern Family*. I base him on a lot of my gay friends. They don't know this but when we have consultations about wardrobe I use photos of them. I'm like, "I want Aaron to look like this." In my head I've got a good representation of where he sits.
How did your girlfriend Sharn and your family and friends react when you told them you were going to play a gay guy on television? There's a lot more *Neighbours* fans in my family now. We've got a family thread on Facebook with all my aunties and uncles and my Nan and Pop. They all speculate what my character is going to do next. They're all really supportive. It's good fun.
Your onscreen love interest is Nate [played by Meyne Wyatt]. What has been your favourite scene with him so far? Do you remember the shipping container scenes? Aaron was meant to be acting with an actress and we were meant to be recreating a special night at Lassiter's Hotel in a promotional box, but the actress didn't show up. Nate came in to have a go at me for something and then Naomi locked the doors and locked us in. There was a list of things she wanted us to do. That scene was on location and it was outside. There were so many extras. There were paparazzi. We were in this box and as soon as the door shut it actually felt like the real deal. The muffled sound; the fact that we were talking and they could only see our lips moving. The novelty of it was awesome. It took a whole day to film that.
You and Meyne kiss on camera. How do you prepare for that? Are those scenes ever awkward? The first one was. After being in a relationship for four years, the first time kissing someone else is a little odd. It was like, "Is this wrong if I have feelings? Should I not have feelings? Is this cheating?" [Laughs]. So the first one was but after that it was like, "This is it." And it's just like anything with acting. You have to recreate the moment with emotions and you've got to make it feel as true as possible. You've always got underlying objectives. Like, I might be kissing him so I can get something else from him, so there's a lot going on when you do that, so the kissing is the tiniest bit of it.
As well as his relationship with Nate, Aaron also has pretty strong friendships with straight characters such as Josh [Harley Bonner].
Do you think it's important for these straight/gay bromances to play out on screen? Yes. It's a true representation of what society is like today. It's not just gay guys and gay guys and straight guys and straight guys. It's all mixed and mingled. Sometimes on shows in America they tend to split them up and it's not a true representation of what society is. And there's not too many people in Erinsborough so they all have to be friends with everybody!
Over the years, Erinsborough has had everything from tornados and fires to murderers and gas explosions. Is there a crazy storyline you'd like to see Aaron involved in? I want Aaron to do something heroic. I want him to save the day and claim all of the glory! It hasn't happened yet but, like any soap, disaster is around every corner.
Who is your all-time favourite *Neighbours* character and why? I'm a massive fan of Stefan Dennis who plays Paul Robinson. He's evil and good in the same way. There's not too many actors that can smile and want to kill you at the same time. When you're in a scene with him it's so surreal to stand near him and watch him act. It's like you're watching the show and you do get nervous and you do get goosebumps because he's that good an actor. And Eve Morey who plays Sonya. She's so relaxed. Every scene you do with her, she changes something. You can't tune out because she'll throw you a bone and if you don't pick it up you're gone. So those two are my biggest idols on the show.

> "I went from working in the building industry to working full-time as an actor… stripping in front of all these extras and a director and there were cameras everywhere!"

DNA readers are familiar with you from your sexy aussieBum shoots. How did you become an aussieBum model? It was pretty funny. I competed in Australia's Hottest Tradie competition in 2010 [and won]. Then my friend Steve sent me an email saying that aussieBum were hiring and that I should send in some photos. I can't take photos, so my mum took some of me up against a tree and sent them in. Two days later aussieBum called me in for a casting. Then two days later we did a shoot. That was on a Thursday. On the Sunday everyone was calling me saying to open the paper. There was a full-page campaign. Then the owner from aussieBum called and said, "I forgot to tell you, it just happened so quickly. We got picked up in London and you're on 1,100 bus shelters." All my friends who were holidaying in London sent me photos. That all happened in ten days.
Do you still get tripped out when you see your face on the back of a bus? Yeah! My friend >>

Matt wears aussieBum.

>> was in the States a couple of months ago and I was on a billboard in Los Angeles. I'd love to go there and see it. I've done about seven different campaigns and even now if I drive behind a bus and see my face on it I go, "Ahhh, that's me!" I'll call my mum, my sister, my girlfriend, anyone, and tell them I'm on the back of a bus!

What was it like being named Australia's Tradie Of The Year? That was big, and that's what started my shift from the construction industry. Going from a building site to winning a beauty contest – you can imagine the shit I copped with that! From there I did some media training and had to host all these live shows for the following year. I did presenting training. I used those skills and got paid to do presenting for other companies. That led to a few different television roles and now to where I am today. So that was the best thing I could have done.

How do you maintain your physique? When I was younger I was quite heavy. I got to 111kg. Now I'm 86kg. I lost all that weight and got to a good level of fitness. From that point on I've just maintained it. I haven't really had an extreme journey to lose 50kg or anything like that. A lot of it is with your food. I mean, I do love Nutella donuts but I can only have two a month. I appreciate the results by saying no. That's enough for me. I crave a good fitness level. As for training, I train on average around five times a week. I go to group sessions and this gym called F45. You go in for 45 minutes and then you're out of there.

Do you have any advice for anyone watching *Neighbours* who's struggling with their sexuality? A lot of it is inside your own head. Surround yourself with people who believe in what you believe in. You are the product of the five people who are closest to you. If you're hanging around people who believe in something completely different to you, you're just going to end up having anxiety or becoming them. So find a new group of friends if that's not what you've got already. Be a kid. As people grow up they put up all their barriers. We think certain things are wrong and right, we restrain ourselves from doing certain things. When you're a kid it doesn't really matter. That's how we should be. So, yeah, surround yourself with five like-minded people.

Some pretty big names in Hollywood right now [Chris and Liam Hemsworth, Russell Crowe, Guy Pearce] got their break on Aussie soaps like *Neighbours*. Do you plan to tackle America in the future? It would be naive for me to assume that I'm going to get to the level of those guys. The people who have made it are all extremely talented. I haven't worked with them but from what I've heard they were next level. In the green room they always worked harder than anybody else and were always 110 percent committed to what they did, and I'm only new to this. I'm a first year apprentice. For me to say that now would be pretty silly. But I'm definitely working to be as good as I can be.

Have you always been a *Neighbours* fan? Yeah. We were always split between *Neighbours* and *Home And Away* growing up. We'd come home from school, do our homework, then sit at the television and we'd watch it every day.

What other shows are you loving at the moment? I love *Suits* and *Bloodline*.

Is it trippy working with those classic actors who have been on the show for years? Yes. You can tell how good they are as well. They are great mentors. Jackie, who plays Susan, helped me out just the other day. I was struggling with a particular scene and she came over and said, "Why don't we try this and then try that." Then we shot it and it was perfect. Even Alan Fletcher who plays Karl – sometimes he'll direct his own scenes. He knows exactly what happens. It's great.

Do the actors hang out with each other outside of the show? Yes. A lot of the guys like playing golf up at a driving range with Fletch and Chris Milligan and Scott McGregor. It's a really good environment and everyone's so supportive. In most companies with a hierarchy there's always gossip and bitching and moaning. But there's none. There's people who have been there for 23 years. People in >>

Matt wears aussieBum.

> “The first time kissing [Meyne Wyatt] I was thinking, ‘Is this wrong if I have feelings? Should I not have feelings? Is this cheating?”

Matt wears aussieBum.

> When you're in a scene with Stefan Dennis… it's like you're watching the show and you get nervous and you get goosebumps because he's that good an actor.

Matt wears Teamm8.

Matt wears 2Eros.

Matt wears aussieBum.

>> make-up have been there for 15 years. People in costume have been there nearly 30!

Are fans asking when you're going to appear in the opening titles? Maybe! There's a lot of people asking that and I can't answer it yet. It's good to know people are barracking for me. Where do you get that? In a world of online trolling how often do you get only good comments?

Do you still watch the show now that you're in it? For a long while I couldn't. I thought I was woeful. I kept wondering if I could even do this. The stuff we're filming now and the stuff that's on air; I'm in a happy place with. I can sit down and watch it without closing my eyes!

So you're your own worst critic? Big time. And when you're watching it you know what your lines are and you know the way you wanted it to sound and it's not how you imagined. You forget the storyline. You forget the big picture because you're focused on all these small things. I like watching everyone else. That's my favourite part. Like in the fire earlier this year, I cried. I knew what had happened but my eyes watered. Like, "Oh man, that's terrible. She's going to have the baby. She might die." On the night of the fire we had just over 2,000 tweets with the hashtag *Neighbours*. It trended three days in a row.

> "I want Aaron to do something heroic. It hasn't happened yet but, like every soap, disater is just around the corner!"

This is the Summer Travel issue of DNA. What's the best thing about summer? I hate winter unless you're at the snow or have a really cool jacket you want to wear.

Do you have a favourite travel destination? The best holiday I've had yet is snowboarding in Japan. It's a magical place. You hike to the peak of the mountains and you can't hear anything. Not a bird, a plane or anything. I just said I hate winter and then said my favourite holiday is in the snow in Japan!

Ha! Is there anything that DNA readers don't know about you? I was in *The Wiggles Movie* when I was eight [laughs], and I've always wanted to be an architect. Even to this day I think after I've retired I'd love to do a university course and become an architect and design my own house.

Is there going to be a *Neighbours* cliffhanger at the end this series? Oh yeah, of course! There's always one. This one is a triple banger! ★

Matt wears aussieBum.

The author, Joshua Heath at Karma Kandara.

Five-Star Bali

Forget six-dollar massages, over-crowded clubs, and standard hotels filled with yelping children, **Bali's luxury scene** is booming and ready to cater to your every whim. Joshua Heath went through hell on this assignment…

Sundara, Four Seasons, Jimbaram Bay.

LIKE MANY Australians, I visited Bali in my early twenties on a shoestring budget and loved every minute: racing through the streets on a scooter, massages on the beach, and crazy Kuta nightlife. Now that I'm a little older and have a better bank balance I've developed a taste for the finer things in life, including how I like to holiday. I've enjoyed the sun-soaked beaches of Saint Tropez and Mykonos, but never thought of Bali as a high-end holiday destination. All that's changed. Some of Bali's resorts and restaurants are stunningly world-class.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

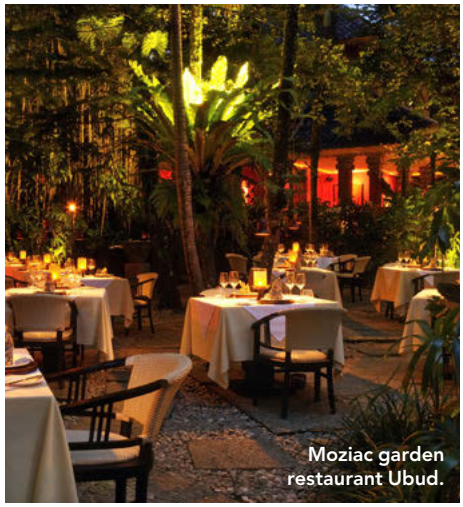
Some of the world's best chefs and mixologists have put Bali's culinary scene on the map. Here are my top 5.

SUNDARA

Set on the private beach of the Four Seasons Jimbaran Bay overlooking the 57-metre infinity pool, Sundara has five-star flair with a sexy, sophisticated and relaxed beach club vibe. The panoramic sunset views don't hurt either. Unlike many other sunset destinations in Bali, Sundara is not over-crowded.

Barcelona cocktail master Javier de las Muelas of Dry Martini has set the bar high with his cocktail list, and the Asian-inspired

Model, Junus Borisov at Karma Kandara.


Moziac garden restaurant Ubud.

cuisine by chief Liam Nealon is designed to be shared, allowing guest to sample the extensive menu. Dinner is served across two levels with every table offering incredible views of Jimbaran Bay. For romantic moments, dinner can also be served by candlelight on the beach.

MOZAIC

Enter the Balinese doorway to a tropical garden of simple elegance and five-star service. Mozaic is a multi-award winning restaurant with an ever-changing menu of either a six- or eight-course degustation, showcasing the best native and international ingredients. Carefully selected wine pairings are served with each course. Make sure to book as Mozaic is very popular, and with good reason. I spent over three hours indulging in all it had to offer.

FOUR SEASONS SAYAN

Set on the banks of the fast-flowing Ayung, this riverside restaurant offers a rustic French-style menu in a relaxed and casual atmosphere. Three huge prawns (at least 23cm) made up my prawn and avocado cocktail starter, which along with four different dipping sauces, took up most of my table. Chicken Basquaise (their signature dish) baked in a cast-iron pot with bell peppers, quail eggs and smoked duck jus may be one of the best things I've ever put in my mouth. This is a great spot for a long, relaxed lunch or dinner.

Four Seasons Sayan.

URCHIN GRILL AND RAW BAR

Urchin is one of Seminyak's newest and finest additions. The open-plan kitchen gives you a front row seat to watch chefs meticulously cook and plate each dish like a piece of art. The chefs are, indeed, like curators, choosing the highest quality local seafood and thoughtfully showcasing it in a mouthwatering explosion of flavour. I'm not usually a fan of raw fish, however, Nicolas, Urchin's hot French maître d', assured me I'd enjoy it if I trusted him. I did, and I did! Every dish was unique and delicious with the staff explaining everything placed on the table. No dish needed extra seasoning. Every flavour was spot on. Make sure this one is on your list, even if it's just to check out Nicolas.

Urchin also offers gin lovers an extensive high-end selection topped with homemade tonic or soda and garnished with a selection of unique ingredients like dehydrated rosemary or star anise. My suggestion: Monkey 47.

MERAH PUTIH

Named after the colours of the Indonesian flag, this impressive restaurant features floor-to-ceiling windows that enclose an atrium-style dining room of palm trees that create a mini-ecosystem. Cathedral-like illuminated columns tower over diners and draw attention to the incredible ceiling, which provides a spectacular water show when it rains. No expense has been spared in creating this architecturally beautiful, eco-sustainable building, which includes an equally showstopping wine room of rare and unique vintages.

Merah Putih's menu is designed to share, divided into "traditional" and "modern" with small and large plate selections. Both menus deliver traditional full flavours from various regions of Bali and Indonesia. You may not resist the temptation to lick your plate clean. >>

Karma Kandara.

Joshua and Junus at Semara Luxury Villa Resort.

ACCOMMODATION

Cliff-top villas overlooking turquoise waters, private butlers on call 24/7, infinity pools set inside lush, tropical forests. These are just some of the offerings from Bali's top luxury resorts.

Karma Kandara Villa.

KARMA KANDARA

This grand, cliff-front resort in Uluwatu on the southwestern tip of the Bukit Peninsula boasts 54 luxury villas of 2, 3 and 4 bedrooms. Each has its own private pool (which you may share with monkeys from time to time). Villas are in classic Balinese style with contemporary interiors and fully equipped kitchens.

Karma's main restaurant, di Mare, suspends 85 metres above the surf on a rocky outcrop overlooking the iconic infinity pool, making it one of Bali's most dramatic dining locations. But the highlight of this resort is the opulent Karma Spa. This outdoor relaxation area has unparalleled views of the Indian Ocean and treatments take place in villas balanced on the edge of the cliff. No need for piped relaxation soundtracks of whale songs and the lapping ocean here; it's playing live! Being face down just got a whole lot better.

SEMARA LUXURY VILLA RESORT

Seven individual villas, each with a dedicated butler, offer six-star luxury accommodation and service. Each villa provides complete privacy and overlooks the turquoise Indian Ocean some 90 metres below. Infinity pools and expansive, lush gardens will have you relaxing the moment you walk through the huge wooden doors of your own private Balinese compound. Sexy muscle hunk Tim Robards (former DNA cover guy and TV's *The Bachelor*) was staying in the villa next to mine. Sadly, even after climbing up a tree to sneak a peek at him sunbathing naked I couldn't see a thing! These villas are super private and I had to settle for stalking him on Instagram.

For the ultimate villa experience, I highly recommend dining privately with a menu prepared by your own personal chef. By day you can soak up the sun at famous Finn's Beach Club as resident DJs pump out the tunes and diners feast on a well-balanced mix of local and international cuisine. When the tide is low, rock pools and a crystal-clear lagoon appear – perfect for snorkeling, kayaking and paddle boarding. End the day in a beanbag toasting marshmallows in front of a bonfire and watch the sun set before taking the cable car back up to your villa.

KAYUMANIS UBUD

"Welcome home," said our driver as we pulled into this intimate hideaway in the heart of Bali's mystical Ubud. Kayumanis does not accommodate children under 16 and with only 23 very private villas you'll feel like the only guest at this very friendly resort. Through the gates and behind the high walls of your "home" sits a large pool, bedroom, open-air living space and bathroom. The villas are extremely private and perfect for couples wanting a discreet, romantic getaway. Kayumanis takes full advantage of its surroundings with its restaurant and spa overlooking the impressive tropical forest, which has a river, the peaceful Ayung, running through it. >>

Kayumanis, Ubud open-air bathroom.

THE BALÉ

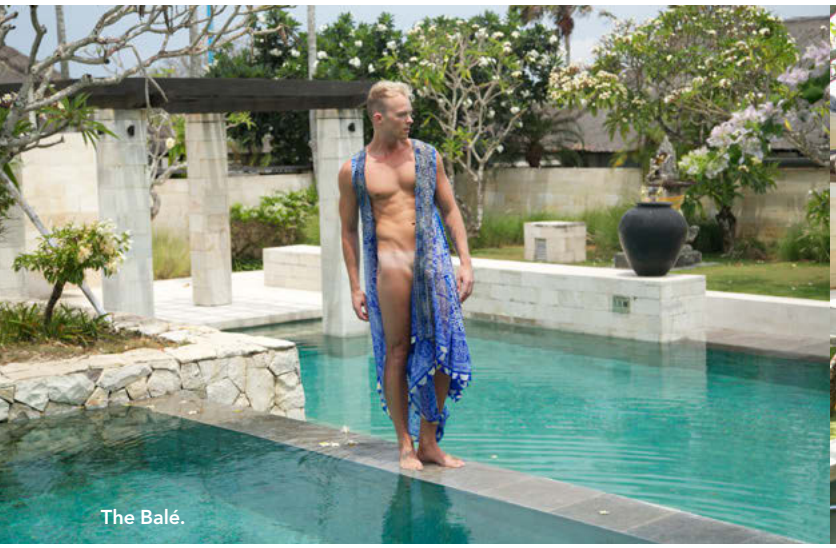
Stylish, chic and modern, The Balé in Nusa Dua would not look out of place on a Greek island, with its immaculately designed pavilions, simple gardens and sleek modern interiors. Their no-children policy is a welcome point of difference. (There's nothing worse than trying to get some sun in your skimpiest gear with little terrors screaming in the pool.) Two huge main pools with daybeds submerged in shallow water beg you to lay on them with a cocktail and do nothing else. Your private pool, accessed directly off the bathroom, is shaded by fragrant frangipani trees. Your king-sized open-air day bed provides the perfect retreat for an afternoon cuddle in complete privacy.

FOUR SEASONS SAYAN

This world-renowned resort features 18 spacious suites and 42 private villas. It's hidden in a lush paradise minutes from Bali's artistic capital, Ubud. Although the Four Seasons is a large hotel chain, in Sayan it's a boutique resort offering an exceptional level of luxury. My private villa overlooked the incredible forest teeming with birdlife and, as the mist rolls in each morning, offered a sight rarely seen anywhere. Morning meditation and yoga classes run most days with anti-gravity yoga their newest addition, taking place in a purpose-built, open-air bamboo studio.

FOUR SEASONS JIMBARAN BAY

Designed as a traditional Balinese village, this luxurious all-villa resort spreads across 35 acres of oceanfront and is only 30 minutes from the exciting nightlife of Seminyak. Villas offer open-air dining that overlooks private plunge pools where you can enjoy ocean views from the comfort of your own sun lounge. ★



The Balé.

The Balé villa with private pool.

Day bed at The Balé.

Four Seasons, Sayan, Anti-Gravity Yoga.

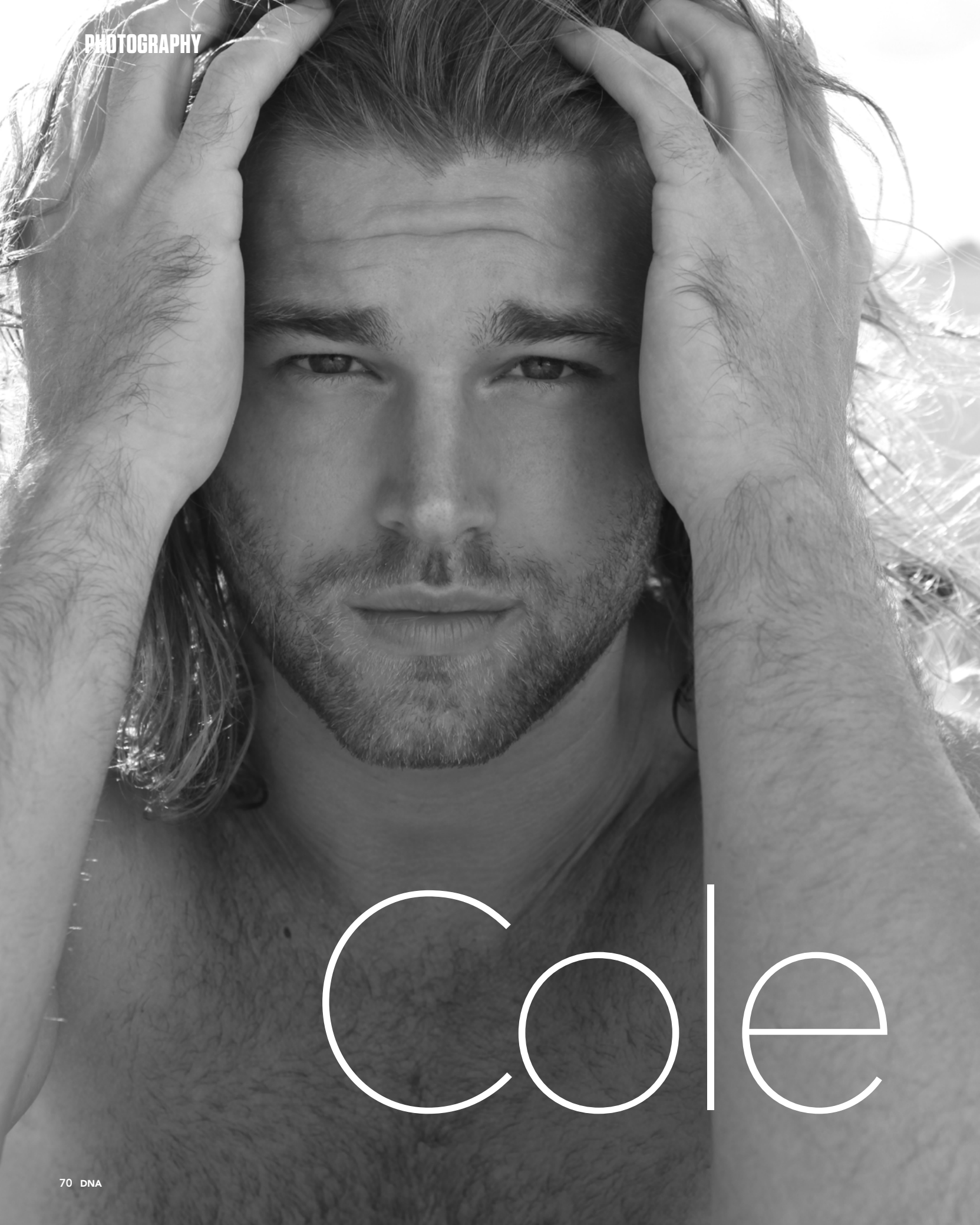
Four Seasons, Jimbaran Bay.

UBER BALI

Although the taxis are already cheap, Uber is even cheaper. From Nusa Dua to the heart of Seminyak (the shopping, nightlife and restaurant area) takes 35 minutes by car. It's $25 in a taxi or just $9 with Uber. This makes staying in the island's more desirable areas rather than in the thick centres an even more affordable option. That trip to Mixwell, Bali's best gay bar, just got a whole lot easier.

FLIGHT TIP

Many Australian airlines offer direct flights to Bali, however, if a volcano erupts and closes the airport (which happens sporadically) you have a far greater chance of making your flight during the open window period with Garuda. At the time of writing, all Australian airlines had cancelled flights in and out of Bali due to volcanic ash, while Garuda's flights were all on schedule. I also prefer Garuda for comfort and quality.



Cole

Last September we named Cole Monahan one of the Sexiest Men Alive. In this new shoot, windswept and rugged, Cole channels the Hemsworth brothers' masculine, leonine appeal, while giving us even more than we got from Thor.

PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL DAR

Cole wears Emporio Armani briefs.

Cole wears 2xist briefs.

Cole wears Emporio Armani sports brief.

Cole wears Calvin Klein briefs.

Cole wears Calvin Klein briefs.

Cole wears vintage nylon swim briefs.

(This page and opposite) September, the long Labour Day weekend, is Southern Decadence – New Orleans' gay time.

GOOD OLD NEW ORLEANS

Boys, blues, beads and a party that never ends. Phillip Portman explores **quirky old world New Orleans**.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RILEY-MCFARLANE PHOTOGRAPHY AND PHILLIP PORTMAN

IT'S AROUND 10PM on a Friday night and we're trying to navigate the bustling crowds of New Orleans' Bourbon Street. It's super touristy, kind of tacky, and a little bit smelly but like nothing I've ever experienced. On my left there appears to be some sort of Jon Bon Jovi karaoke happening, while Snoop Dogg's *Drop It Like It's Hot* blares from a venue to my right. Sexy college jocks are throwing beads down at people from the balconies above (During Mardi Gras they do this to get women to flash their tits) while young girls who look as if they're from the *Spring Breakers* movie sip brightly-coloured cocktails from giant fishbowls. We spot drunken bridesmaids and a soon-to-be wife on a pub crawl, fellas in business attire winding down after a busy workday, kids having what looks like the most intense deep-and-meaningful New Orleans has ever seen, and the poor trying to exchange cheap knick-knacks for whatever cash they can get.

Suddenly we're stopped in our tracks by religious nuts from the Raven Street Church who have set up in the middle or the strip. They're preaching about the return of Jesus but their homemade crucifix and Christian enthusiasm seems to fall on deaf ears. The drinks are pouring, the music is pumping and people are here to party! It's almost like Times Square, The Hollywood Walk Of Fame, or even Australia's very own Gold Coast. These hotspots are fun to check out but you need to venture around to grasp what the city is really about. Luckily in New Orleans you can cross over a few streets either side of Bourbon and immerse yourself in the true culture of the city.

New Orleans has a distinctly European vibe and is easily the most unique US city I've visited to date. It's divided into different areas: The Garden District, The Central Business District and The French Quarter. The majority of our time is spent exploring the French Quarter, the oldest neighbourhood of New Orleans. Most of the buildings have stood for hundreds of years with some dating back to the 1700s. The Quarter itself is listed a National Historic Landmark by the US government and the buildings have grand balconies out front and lush courtyards at the back. There's also a strange black magic presence and it's not uncommon to spot voodoo dolls in gift shops or Day Of The Dead skulls in bars and cafes.

A good time is never far away and there's plenty of music, bars, shops, restaurants and museums to explore. A must-see is Jackson Square in the heart of the district. This is a hotspot for artists and musicians to share their passion with locals and tourists alike. It's kind of magical watching artists flood the park

with sketches, paintings, quirky caricatures and other unique creations. Jackson Square is so popular among local artists that only 200 permits are granted annually. We're told that some artists have been sharing their work here for 50 years while many are on a long waiting list. It's also home to the stunning St Louis Cathedral, one of New Orleans' most recognisable landmarks. It reminds me of the Disney castle. You can explore inside with a self-guided tour for just $1. While in this area I'd also recommend a walk by The Mississippi River. It's muddy brown during the day, but it's really pretty at night. There are several old time paddlewheels and cruises that travel down the river if you want to explore more.

Mardi Gras season is held annually in early February, and this is the busiest and most exciting time for the city. New Orleans' Mardi Gras carnival can be traced back as far at 1857. It's a massive celebration with floats, parades, balls, music and costumes. The main colours are green, gold and purple, which represent faith, power and justice. There's actually an awesome museum called Mardi Gras World, which is worth checking out if you can't be in town for the big event. It gives you a first hand look at the costumes, floats and parades and all the behind-the-scenes insider information.

If you're not in town for Carnival, there will still be plenty of opportunities to party. My visit fell during the annual White Linen Night, a popular event held on the first Saturday of August (the middle of summer). The entire town dresses in white, paying homage to the days before air-conditioning when locals wore white linen to relieve somewhat the suffocating humidity of Louisiana. Thousands of people cram into the Warehouse District to shop, check out local art, socialise and, of course, to party!

If it's a gay time you're after, hit up Bourbon Street between St Peter and St Ann in the >>

New Orleans' iconic Bourbon Street by night. Below and opposite: New Orleans is famous for its historic buildings, live music and party times.

>> French Quarter. A local assures us that this is the gayest area between here and San Francisco and that the patrons give RuPaul a run for her money. I spot a drag queen on the street promoting The Real Drag Queens Of New Orleans show at Lucky Pierre's. They offer several shows each week and host other nights plus live music in their piano bar. Oz is the number one gay dance club in the city and operates 24/7. They have unique theme nights every day of the week including College Tuesdays and Strip Off Thursdays. The Good Friends Bar on Dauphine Street is great for a quieter night, while The Corner Pocket on St Louis is perfect if you want to hang out with twinks and check out the hottest gay dancers. The bear and leather crowd should travel to Phoenix in the Marigny neighbourhood. This is a perfect venue to be yourself and interact with a friendly and diverse group of guys. New Orleans also has relaxed open container laws, meaning you can drink in public on the streets provided it's in a plastic cup.

In New Orleans, the soothing sounds of jazz are never far away. Whether you're a fan of this type of music or not, Preservation Hall is a must. Located on Peter Street in the heart of the French Quarter, this historic venue lives and breathes traditional New Orleans Jazz with intimate shows by bands featuring a wealth of traditional jazz musicians. The Hall has been operating since the early '60s and strives to stay true to its blues-y roots. A girl in our group burst into tears at the end of the set because she was so moved by what she'd just experienced. Concerts are held three-times nightly, but you'll need to queue early to secure your ticket.

> **"A local assures us that this is the gayest area between here and San Francisco and that the patrons give RuPaul a run for her money."**

If you're in Louisiana for a few days, a day trip to the Oak Alley antebellum plantation is highly recommended. Located about an hour from town, this historic landmark is hauntingly beautiful and famous for its 300-year-old alley of oak trees. There are over 25 acres of history to explore but the Big House is the highlight. You may recognise it from Beyonce's *Déjà Vu* music video and from an array of films including *Interview With A Vampire*, *Primary Colours* and *Nightrider*. Guided tours come complete with old school costumes and an insightful history of the families who once occupied this residence. You'll also want to try a traditional mint julep (or a lemonade for non-drinkers). As stunning as the beautiful houses, well-maintained lawns and period dresses are, it's important to remember that this >>

>> plantation was built on the backs of slaves. There's a Slavery At Oak Alley exhibit on the grounds, which gives a true sense of the plantation's grim history. Africans were enslaved here from 1835 to 1865 and lived in slave quarters a world away from the mansion they helped to maintain just a few short metres away. You see how enslaved men, women and children lived, how they were treated, what they wore and how they worked. Unlike the oak trees and big house, the original slave quarters didn't survive the elements but replicas have been re-constructed.

Back in New Orleans, food has a huge influence on the city and there are many cuisines unique to the area. We're treated to a long lunch at Antoine's, a restaurant that has cemented itself as one of New Orleans' famous dining destinations. Antoine's has been operating since 1840 by the same family and has lasted through the Civil War, both World Wars, the Great Depression and countless natural disasters including Hurricane Katrina in 2005. It's the oldest family-run restaurant in America and one of the fancier places I've ever eaten. Getting dolled up in dress shirts, slacks and leather shoes when it's stifling hot outside might seem ridiculous, but it feels worth it when you walk through the doors. This place is oozing in New Orleans history and we're told that they don't like to change things around too much. I get the impression that they want it to feel like home and although I'm in a strange and foreign city, it does. Over the next few hours we sample some of New Orleans' famous cuisines including *pommes de terre soufflés* (puffed potatoes), gumbo, chicken Creole, Louisiana gulf shrimp, oysters and omelette Alaska Antoine. There are also plenty of cafes and restaurants around town where you can try other unique cuisines including po' boys, beignets, jambalaya, hush puppies and more.

The thing to remember when you're in New Orleans is that it's a marathon, not a sprint. There is so much to see and do that it can become a little overwhelming. I spent just three days here and feel as though I only began to scratch the surface. Due to its humid climate, a visit during the cooler months (December to May) will be more comfortable. If you love to party and are keen to explore an American city like none other, New Orleans is a must-do. ★

MORE: *Air New Zealand now flies from all Australian capital cities to Houston via Auckland. Easy connections to New Orleans are available. Visit www.airnewzealand.com.au.*
Phillip flew courtesy of Air New Zealand.

GAY OLD N'AWLINS

New Orleans is a party any time of year, but you might as well go when the gay boys are getting their gear off! Story and photography by Riley-McFarlane Photography.

IT WAS THE backdrop to *American Horror Story: Coven*, and its oldest cemetery has a gravesite adorned with a six-inch gold stiletto. Known as "The Big Easy", creepy but cool New Orleans is a popular place to play all year-round.

Southern boys are cute and laid back. They're friendly, hospitable and that southern accent can set your heart a-fluttering and your knees to quivering. The bars are attitude-free and open all hours of the day. You can even get a "bucket" (provided it's plastic) of your favourite libation to ensure you stay hydrated as you make your way from one establishment to another in your search for music, entertainment or company.

Mardi Gras, The French Quarter, and the Mississippi river are probably the first things that people associate with New Orleans, but its calendar is also filled with gay and lesbian events and festivals. Combined with the city's rich history, restaurants, landmarks, jazz music, and of course liberal drinking laws, it means you'd better rest up before you visit.

Not sure when to book that trip? February (actually, 47 days before Easter) is Mardi Gras and is New Orleans' most famous celebration. There are parades with amazing floats for days, culminating on "Fat Tuesday". Mardi Gras is not a strictly gay event, but in the lower French Quarter, there is a tradition: "You show, they throw". Look up to the balconies resplendently decorated and teeming with people eager to throw beads to the crowd… on one condition: "Show us your (insert body part here)!" Flash your bits to qualify for those famous trinkets.

Travel in June to experience one of the fastest growing Pride celebrations in the States. From family-friendly daytime events, to seminars, parties that run into the early hours and a parade that wends its way through the French Quarter, Pride weekend is a great time to visit.

In September, the long Labour Day weekend brings Southern Decadence to New Orleans. Its sultry, sexy, and it is now the biggest event on the NOLA (New Orleans, Louisiana) gay calendar. It's the gayer, predominantly male version of Mardi Gras. Yet another opportunity to wear elaborate costumes, high fashion or next to nothing. It features a parade, parties, music, drag shows and remember: the more beads a boy is wearing, the more he's been flashing his junk!

What about where to go when you get here? Most of the venues are clustered around St Anne and Bourbon Streets. Cafe Lafitte In Exile is the oldest gay bar in the United States. It's a favourite haunt with a ton of history (try a Sazerac, said to be America's first ever cocktail, and the official drink of New Orleans!)

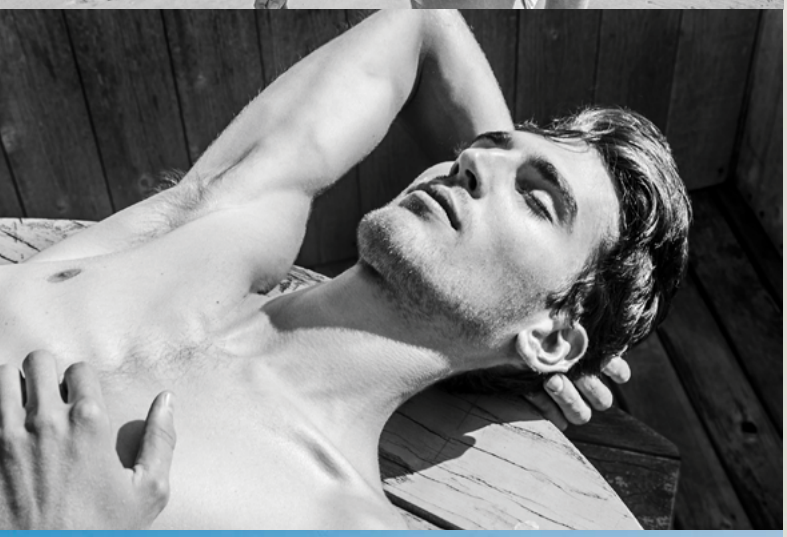
From 10pm, dance the night away at Parade or Oz. For bars, the choice is extensive: The Corner Pocket, Good Friends Bar, The Voodoo Lounge or Rawhide 2010 to name just a few.

If you don't end up leaving the bar as the sun comes up, then you will have time to see some of the sights. Make sure to ride the St Charles Street cable car (hop on and off to explore the stately homes in the Garden District). Visit Lafayette Cemetery Number 1 and read the headstones, which provide a fascinating history of the area. Ride on a genuine paddle-wheel steamer then take a ghost tour, a walking tour, a voodoo tour or a horse-drawn carriage tour!

And then there's the food. *Ahh,* the food. Try a beignet (a pastry like a donut), and sample both a Muffuletta and a Po'boy sandwich. You'll find Cajun food with its French and Spanish heritage, regional Louisiana cuisine, and, of course, the renowned seafood. Finally, there is home-style southern food (think grits, collard greens and fried chicken).

No matter what time of year you visit New Orleans, you're bound to be charmed by its multi-cultural magic. Just make sure to pronounce it like a tourist – "N'Awlins".

> "Flash your bits to qualify for those famous trinkets."



Fire Island: *Modern Retro*

PHOTOGRAPHY KAMERA ADDIKT
MODELS ROBERT KRESSIN AND TREVOR OLSON (NEW YORK MODEL MANAGEMENT), AND DMITRY KORIKOV (RE:QUEST MODEL MANAGEMENT).

FOR MANY gay men, Fire Island is a sacred site. It features prominently in our mythology, associated as it is with social and sexual freedom, uninhibited parties, the disco era, drag queens on boats, and sex in sand dunes.

In the age of HIV/AIDS Fire Island became a symbolic lost paradise in Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* and the feature film *Longtime Companion*. But its divinity in gay popular culture is preserved in the photography of Tom Bianchi's excellent *Fire Island*.

A new generation of image-makers are being inspired by the eternal youth of the island. Creative duo and best friends, Misha and Nik, working as Kamera Addikt, are one example.

"We love Fire Island," they tell DNA. "We spent the whole summer at The Pines gay community, where we had a few shoots for the coffee table book we are working on.

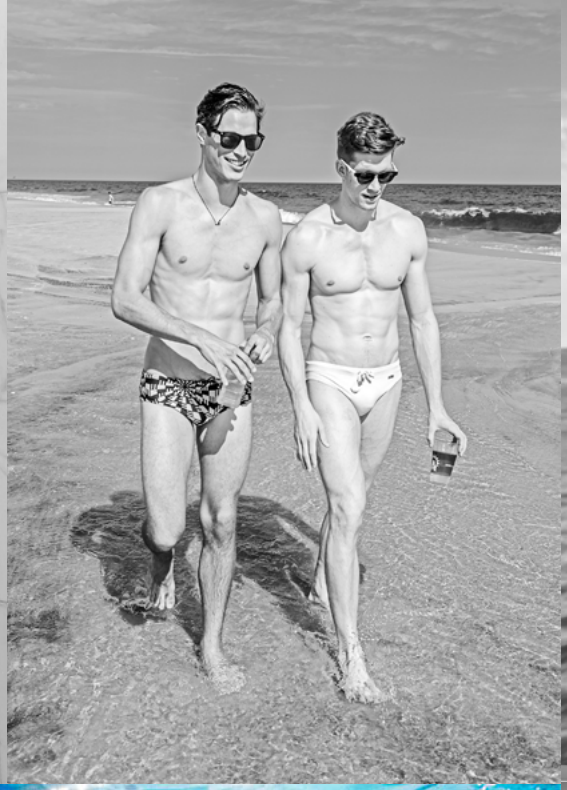
"We have a very strong personal connection to the island. We go there every summer, as often as we can, and stay by the beach for as long as we can. It's a unique place with nature like nowhere we've travelled to before – the dunes with the pine forests right by the ocean."

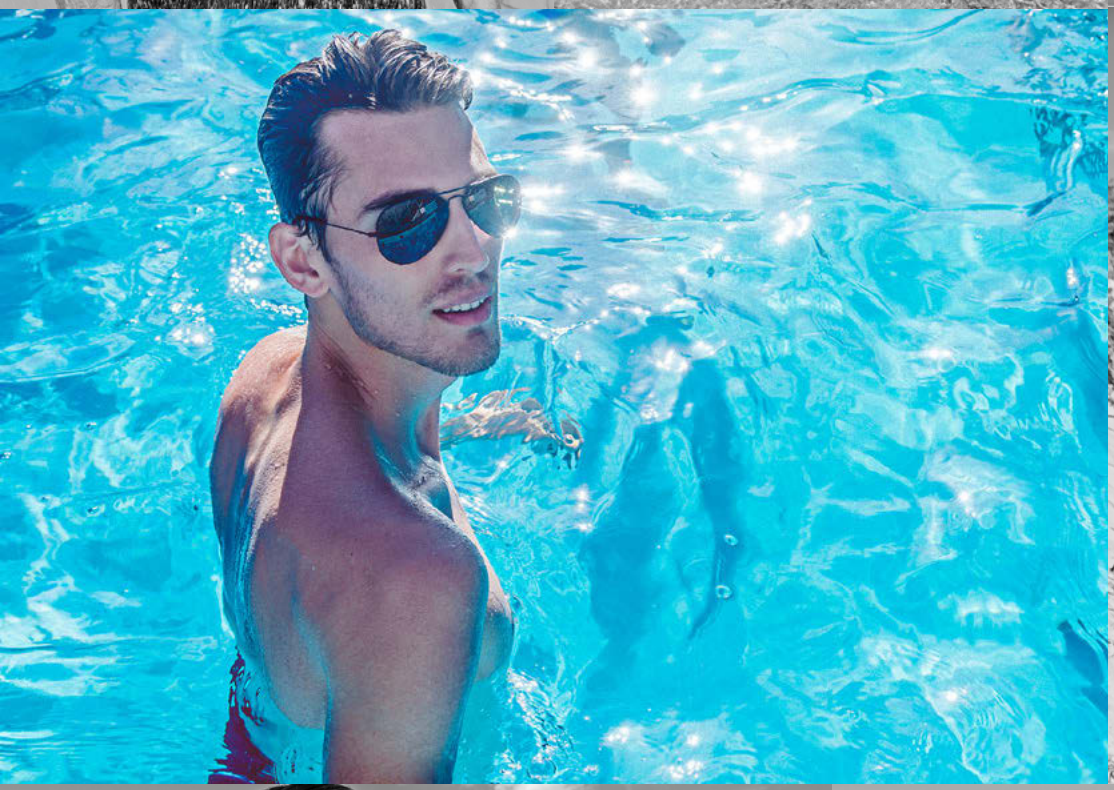
The boys also love its proximity to New York and, of course… "Yes, the crazy parties!"

In these images they've used swimwear and underwear in vintage styles, and chosen black-and-white for a romantic, retro feel, like old sepia-toned holiday snaps you'd find in a shoebox under a bed. Even their models' physiques refer back to a less muscle-obsessed era. There's a distinct chemistry between the models, Robert and Trevor, but according to the photographers, they are not a romantic couple, just good friends.

Misha and Nik say the island is a continual source of inspiration for their photography, as is Tom Bianchi's work. Their advice? "You definitely should come check out Fire Island someday if you're travelling to New York."

MORE: *www.kameraaddikt.com*





THE SNOW REPORT

It was the "best ever" **Gay Ski Week** in Queenstown in 2015 according to punters. DNA was there, and oft pissed, to capture some choice moments!

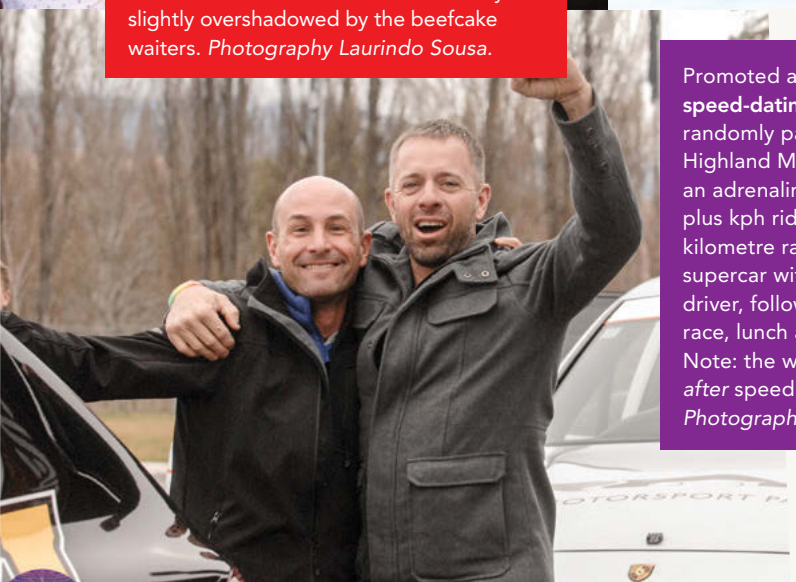
The **Opening Night Party** at The Find with DJ Jake Kilby included plenty of Broken Shed vodka and a ribbon-cutting ceremony by the mayor to launch Queenstown's official Gay Ski Week. *Photography Tracey Green.*

At Cardrona Alpine Resort, Gay Ski Week's **Mountain Hosting** was a great way to meet other skiers at a similar skill level and enjoy a safe and fun guided tour of the mountain. Cardrona also hosted Onesie Day, the Veuve Clicquot champagne desk and DJ ACraig to gay-up the day! *Photography Tracey Green.*

The Wet And Wild **Foam Party** at Loco Cantina had DJ ACraig pumping out the tunes while the foam machine pumped out the bubbles and the boys pumped out the fun. *Photography Laurindo Sousa.*

Ben Batterbury, Executive Chef at True South Dining at The Rees Hotel created a magnificent menu for the **Formal Dinner** evening. His prawns in seaweed butter, slow-cooked lamb, and spiced pear jelly with chocolate vanilla custard were only slightly overshadowed by the beefcake waiters. *Photography Laurindo Sousa.*

Competition was fierce at **Queer Quiz Night** at The Ballarat Trading Company, hosted by Durex. Unfortunately for this punter there were no extra points for amazing footwear. *Photography Laurindo Sousa.*



Promoted as the "ultimate **speed-dating** event" boys randomly paired-up at Highland Motorsport Park for an adrenalin-pumping 180-plus kph ride around the 4 kilometre racetrack in a V8 supercar with a professional driver, followed by a go-cart race, lunch and wine tasting. Note: the wine tasting was *after* speed car driving! *Photography Jacqui Van Dam.*

At 450 metres above Queenstown via gondola, the Skyline restaurant hosted the **cabaret night** and dinner starring Auckland's glamorous/infamous Caluzzi Queens. Song, dance and lip-synching ensued followed by live music from The Golightlies, who packed the dance floor. *Photography Laurindo Sousa.*

The **Beach Party** at Brazz featured DJ Adam Love. Skiers and boarders were relieved to be out of ski gear and into beachwear for a change. Speedos and floral leis were *de rigueur. Photography Tracey Green.*

The final night party was themed "**Once Upon A Time**…" and it did feel like the end of a fairy tale week of magic! There were plenty of princesses, wicked queens, Disney Princes and some rugged superheroes. DJs Adam Love and Kate Monroe rocked the historic Memorial Centre. *Photography Tracey Green.*

CARDRONA ALPINE RESORT

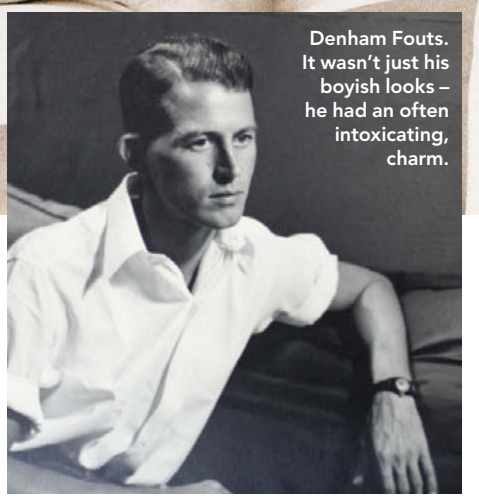
With three bowls over a 345-hectare terrain, Cardrona's ski fields offer plenty of variety. Half the runs are ranked blue (intermediate) with a quarter each for green (beginner) and black (advanced). The ratio of boarders to skiers is roughly 50/50 and there are plenty of jumps and board runs. With an average snowfall of 2.9 metres, the ski season goes from the second week of June to the second week of October, operating as an adventure park for bikers over the summer months. Cardrona hosted the World Winter Games 2015, which were wrapping up as Gay Ski Week began. The resort received four consecutive nights of snowfall during GSW with mostly clear skies during the days, making for perfect conditions.

Cardrona is about an hour-and-fifteen minute's drive from Queenstown but worth the trek. Renting a car and self-driving offers a certain amount of autonomy and flexibility, but taking one of the many coach services means you won't have to put the snow chains on the tyres yourself or deal with the sometimes treacherous road conditions during snow. The Gay Ski Week team will help you organise your own transport or put you in their Rainbow Bus, which leaves from the official host hotel each morning.

MORE: *www.cardrona.com*

For the 2016 Gay Ski Week program and bookings go to gayskiweekqt.com

"THE IMPUREST HAPPINESS I HAVE EVER KNOWN"



Denham Fouts. It wasn't just his boyish looks – he had an often intoxicating, charm.

He inspired great literature and instant erections in some of the most prestigious men of wealth, arts and letters, for **Denham Fouts** (1914-1948) was more than your everday male prostitute. Arthur Vanderbilt, author of *Best-Kept Boy In The World*, reveals his allure.

ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW what he would have become if he hadn't been a writer, author Truman Capote said, "An attorney," adding, "Also I wouldn't have minded being kept, but no one has ever wanted to keep me – not more than a week or so."

His friend Denham Fouts, however, had no such trouble. About him, Capote remarked, "To watch him walk into a room was an experience. He was beyond being good-looking; he was the single most charming-looking person I've ever seen." He loved to conjecture that "had Denham Fouts yielded to Hitler's advances there would have been no World War Two" and he referred to Denny as "the best-kept boy in the world". Nice work if you can get it. And Denny got it. He was a natural.

Born in 1914 in Jacksonville, Florida, Denham Fouts was one of those rare individuals endowed with an inescapable sexual magnetism. His admirers were many of the most distinguished men of their day. Writer and intellectual Gore Vidal once remarked that it was a pity Denham never wrote a memoir, and described him as *un homme fatal*. Jimmie Daniels, a nightclub singer who performed at his eponymous Harlem club, remarked that Denny "was about the most beautiful boy anybody had ever seen. His skin always looked as if it had just been scrubbed; it seemed to have no pores at all, it was so smooth."

To King Paul Of Greece, Denny was "Darling Denham", and his telegrams from the Royal Palace were always signed "Love, Paul". Best-selling author Glenway Wescott thought him "absolutely enchanting and ridiculously good-looking. He had the most delicious body odor; I once swiped one of his handkerchiefs." Lord Tredegar, one of Britain's largest landowners, once saw Denny led by the police through the lobby of an expensive hotel in Capri, and convinced the police to let him pay the bills Denny owed. He then took Denny to accompany him and his new wife as they continued on their world tour. Author Christopher Isherwood, who Denny considered his best friend, referred to him as "the most expensive male prostitute in the world".

It didn't start out that way. Denham Fouts was just 19 when he moved to New York City. The year was 1933, the depth of the Great Depression, and he found a job as a stock boy in a grocery store. It was in the city that Denny first awakened to his extraordinary powers. He experienced the surprise, and then intoxication, of having all heads turn his way. Walking into a nightclub or along a city street, people stopped and stared. The decision to give up bagging groceries and stocking shelves was really one that fell into his lap.

When Denny befriended the young Glenway Wescott on his arrival to New York City, he asked him in his seductive Southern drawl, "Now Glenway, you know everything. I want you to tell me: how does one manage to get kept?" Wescott found his naiveté amusing. "To begin with," he explained, "you must never use that word 'kept'. Think of something you want to do that takes money to learn and then ask someone for help and guidance. You'll get much more money that way than by coming at it straight on." But Denny did come at it straight on, and it wasn't long at all before the suddenly sophisticated 19-year-old was accompanying a German baron to Europe.

There is no evidence Denny was particularly well-endowed or was any sort of sexual athlete. Rather it was something about his looks, coupled with Southern charm, that made him irresistible to gay men, men on their honeymoons, married men with children, an Ace of the Luftwaffe, an officer of the British Royal Air Force, and women.

The young artist Michael Wishart first met

Denny at a party in Paris. To Michael, he appeared to be about 21 years of age – he was actually 32. "In other circumstances, one would have imagined him to be the best-looking boy at a West Coast college. He wore nothing but cream-coloured flannel trousers and had the torso of an athlete. Along his strong shoulders and golden forearms ran snow-white mice with startled pink eyes, which he stroked with the back of his hands." This was vintage Denny. "Trotsky!" Michael heard Denny call, and an enormous black dog gambolled in. Denny had adopted the dog while doing service as a conscientious objector at a forestry camp outside Los Angeles. Side by side, Denny and Trotsky walked into the bedroom, illuminated only by a small orange-shaded oil lamp set in the center of a large bed. Over the bed hung an oil painting by Pavel Tchelitchew, the Russian émigré artist who at the time was collected as avidly as Picasso or Dali. It was a life-sized canvas of a naked Adonis, its focus on the crotch from between splayed legs. Sometimes Denny hung this on the ceiling over his bed; sometimes he hung it upside-down. Denny stretched luxuriously across the bed now and, as Michael watched, picked up a pipe, impaled an opium pill with a gold needle and mashed it around the base of the pipe's bowl. He then heated the pipe over the oil lamp on the bed, inhaled the smoke and held it in before finally tapping the pipe into a dish on the floor to satisfy Trotsky's own addiction.

It must have been quite a scene for a young artist's eyes. In his memoirs, Michael Wishart noted that he had been in love three times in his life and that on average it took him about 45 minutes to realise it. That night, he beat his average. He described his time with Denny as "the impurest happiness I have ever known" and reflected, "Like all gigolos, and perhaps chameleons, [Denny] simply longed to please, which is to say to do his job well."

Denny had the ability to draw others into his orbit, to raise the sun and moon and the stars with his presence. Intelligent, humorous, charming, he made whoever he was with feel as if they were the center of his universe.

As his friend Christopher Isherwood said about him, "I liked Denny. He was witty; he could make me laugh… I never in my life met anyone who was so much fun to be with… He had a genius for enjoying himself." Isherwood remembered his months with Denny "as some of the happiest of my whole life. Everything we did seemed interesting and amusing."

Denny's conquests were effortless and legion, from shipping tycoons to princes, but his most famous and successful was the heir to a huge British fortune, Peter Watson. Incidentally, the first biography of Watson: *Queer Saint: The Cultured Life of Peter Watson, Who Shook Twentieth-Century Art And Shocked High Society* has just been published.) To be young, handsome, bright and rich were the blessings bestowed upon Peter Watson, and he wore them lightly, with grace and style. He was the youngest child of Sir George Watson who had invented margarine and made a fortune when butter was rationed in Great Britain during World War One. When his father died in 1930, Peter, at 22, became the beneficiary of trusts which allowed him to be a gentleman of leisure and pursue his passion for modern art, building one of the greatest collections ever assembled.

When Peter saw Denny for the first time at a nightclub in Paris in 1935, he had an immediate erection, as he would every time Denny entered a room, and soon they were living together.

From left: Eminent writer Gore Vidal called Denham Fouts *un homme fatal*. Nightclub performer Jimmie Daniels called Fouts, "About the most beautiful boy anybody had ever seen." Denny's finest conquest, millionaire art patron, Peter Watson.

> "Like all gigolos, and perhaps chameleons, Denny simply longed to please, which is to say to do his job well."

Denny had entered the world of his Jacksonville childhood fantasies: a chauffeur-driven Bentley, sport jackets made by the tailor to the Prince Of Wales, Faberge cigarette lighters, the gift of a Picasso that today would fetch more than $100 million. Peter took him to all his favourite haunts in London, Paris, Zurich, Cannes, Nice, Monte Carlo, St Moritz, Milan, Florence, Rome, Capri; they were halcyon days of museums, galleries, sightseeing, bicycling, swimming, theatre, nightclubs, operas, and travels to China and the Far East. The world was their playground and they stayed at the finest hotels, ate at the best restaurants and stayed at the most luxurious resorts.

The crack in their Eden – and it was a Grand Canyon-sized crack – was Denny's addiction to opium, which first developed when he visited China's opium dens. This led to a consuming use not only of opium, but also of cocaine and heroin. What is surprising is that this addiction, which began controlling his life, had no effect on his magic. According to Truman Capote, "Denny radiated a quality that was the exact opposite of what he was: extraordinary health, youth, and unspoiled innocence. Whatever he had done the night before, or the day before, or the week before, he always looked as if he had just awakened on the freshest, most beautiful morning in the world."

There are those whose personalities are so addicting that, for all their faults, life is richer and more fun with them; without them, the world beats empty and hollow. Denny had this power and Peter Watson, his addict, could not be separated for long from his beloved. Denny himself had become addicted to being desired, and, in being the object of desire, had found his self-worth. The two needed each other, and even after fights, usually over Denny's opium addiction, when Denny sought refuge with Prince Paul in a hotel across from the Greek Royal Palace, the two invariably reunited.

Surprisingly, it was not his dissolute lifestyle that ended his short, but charmed, life. Denny had been diagnosed with a congenital heart murmur years earlier and died of a sudden massive heart attack at age 34. He never had the chance to write the memoir that would have explained how it felt to possess these magical powers, but he moves as a muse through many memoirs and tales of the times. Denny is Paul in Christopher Isherwood's *Down There On A Visit*. He is a character in Gore Vidal's novel *The Judgment Of Paris*, and also in his short story *Pages From An Abandoned Journal*. He appears in Truman Capote's infamously unfinished *Answered Prayers* on which the author was working, or not working on, when he died. He was proud to find himself a character in Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*. To be immortalised in a story by one illustrious author would earn him a footnote in history, but to have inspired a body of work as did is to become a legend. ★

MORE: *Arthur Vanderbilt is the author of* ***Best-Kept Boy In The World: The Short, Scandalous Life Of Denny Fouts, Muse To Truman Capote, Gore Vidal And Christopher Isherwood.*** *Find it at Amazon, and select booksellers.*

White Party Palm Springs

...still the best excuse to enjoy desert!

Last year's White Party performers included Jordin Sparks, LeAnn Rimes and *Glee*'s Alex Newel.

PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRANKLIN

IT'S BEEN A STAPLE of the circuit calendar for decades, and now it's taking cues from Barcelona Circuit Week. White Party Palm Springs is a four-day party gauntlet tackled by thousands of men sporting little more than sunscreen. The long weekend blasts off with an underwear party, and continues the next day at the Wet'n'Wild water park with water rides, thumping music, and live shows on a massive floating stage in the middle of a wave pool. The flagship White Party is a 10-hour dance floor marathon of men, LED light panels, state-of-the-art sound, surprise performers and superstar DJs. On Sunday, Mykonos travels to the desert with an Xlsior-branded pool party, then it's on to the world's largest outdoor T-dance until sunset, and, in the final test of endurance, dance til dawn at the closing night party. Can you handle it?

MORE: *White Party Palm Springs is held April 8-11, 2015. Visit www.JeffreySanker.com*

DOWN DIRTY DARLIEZ

Daniel Garofali left Australia to pursue his modelling dreams in the USA – and his clean-cut looks took him all the way to the top. Back home in Sydney recently, he and long-time collaborator, photographer James Demitri, decided to explore the darker side of his personality…

LOSE FAT FAST

This cardio method burns fat, improves health and takes just 20 minutes.

DO YOU FEEL LIKE if you have to face yet another long, drawn-out cardio session you might just scream? You aren't alone. Cardio training can be dull and boring and for most people, that's the name of their game. Each day they force themselves into the gym, "putting in their time" as they go through the cardio workouts they've come to hate.

It's time to put an end to this. Not only are these sessions forming a negative association with exercise in your mind, they aren't even that effective. Just take a close look at the results you've seen over the last 3 to 4 months. Do you look leaner? Do you feel fitter? Chances are you don't. Something needs to change.

Let's look at some information you need to know and remember regarding cardio training, and introduce you to what is the most effective type of cardio.

TYPES OF CARDIO TRAINING

There are two key forms: long, slow distance cardio, and interval training.

Long slow distance cardio involves what the name suggests – lots of cardio done at a slower pace. This is the type of cardio most people are doing in the gym and tend to think will yield the best possible results. You go in, turn on the bike, treadmill or elliptical to a moderate pace and zone out for the next 45-60 minutes. Chances are you watch the seconds on the clock tick by the entire time.

Interval training involves alternating very intense bursts of exercise with shorter intensity exercise. You'll speed up and push yourself hard and, shortly after, back off and give yourself some downtime to rest. Because you're exercising so hard during the intervals, you simply can't sustain this type of cardio long and, as such, it typically only lasts for 15 to 30 minutes at most.

Now, let's go over how each of these impacts your body. When it comes to the distance training, you'll burn some calories. Any exercise will have you burning energy so that's the good news. And since you are going for that longer duration, there's a good chance you'll burn 300-500 calories per session. This will add up and it can help you lose weight.

But the bigger problem here is that often this form of cardio training will have you losing muscle mass tissue along with the small amount of body fat you also lose. The translation is that you look softer despite the fact that you actually weigh less. You've just reduced your lean mass, which is what gives you that fit, toned appearance.

Furthermore, as you begin burning up lean muscle mass, your metabolic rate will also slow down. Muscle is highly metabolically active in the body so the more of it you have, the faster you'll burn fat overall.

Next, while you'll gain cardiovascular benefits, you won't really see much improvement. To see continual improvement, you need to be pushing the intensity level higher than it is currently. You can only do this if you are speeding up the pace.

Finally, this form of cardio can wear you down. It'll create overuse injuries with your knees, ankles and back, leading to pain in the long term for many people. Plus, it can hamper your recovery. If you're doing five to six hours of exercise each week, it's going to get hard to recover. This could eventually go on to cause overtraining.

So, as you can see, there are many negatives associated with long distance slow cardio.

THE ICE PROGRAM

Which brings us to the second type of cardio, interval training, or, as I like to call it, ICE (Intense Cardiovascular Exercise). This technique has you alternating between those full-on minute long bouts of exercise with active rest periods.

For instance, it might work something like this: after doing a warm-up, you go as hard as you can for one minute – I'm talking 10 out of 10 for effort here. Then, once that minute is over, you drop back down on the intensity so you're at around 7 out of 10 for the next four minutes. Then you'll repeat the minute long bout again and follow that with another 3 to 4 minute moderate intensity bout of exercise.

The difference between this method and conventional interval training is that rather than dropping back the intensity to a 2 or 3 out of 10 and resting for just one minute, you keep the intensity to the moderate side, resting for a longer period of time before doing that second interval again.

This helps bring greater cardiovascular benefits and will help to elevate your metabolic rate even higher so that you not only burn calories during the workout session, but continue to burn calories for hours after the workout is over. Research has shown that this style of cardio will provide greater fat loss results, improve your heart function, lower stress, and can also enhance endorphin levels, causing mood boosting, feel-good benefits.

> "You're burning fat while preserving lean muscle mass. This translates into a fitness win-win."

Additionally, because this cardio is intense and requires great muscular power, that also means you'll reshape your body, burning fat while preserving lean muscle mass. This translates into a fitness win-win for you.

So consider the ICE method of cardio training. It's a superior way to train, yielding better results, taking less time, and ensuring you're having a lot more fun while you train. ★

MORE: *To train with Lochi go to www.DNAmagazine.com.au/MMHtraining. Lochi can train you from anywhere in the world if you have a smart phone.*

Postcard from... Sitges Gay Pride

SITGES PRIDE/GAY SITGES GUIDE

Barcelona and Madrid are the marquee names on the Spanish Pride circuit but **one seaside town** is stealing their thunder, writes Joshua Heath.

WITH ITS RAINBOW flags blowing in the breeze, the small Spanish seaside town of Sitges continues to draw thousands of visitors each year to its gay shores. In mid-June, glitter cannons will once again welcome the start of its booming Pride festival.

Sitges Pride features a packed schedule over five days, featuring international DJs, tribute acts, pool parties, and the fabulously funny Lady Diamond Sitges on the main stage. By day the town is awash with locals and day trippers from Barcelona and its cafes and shops are a buzz of activity. The two main beaches (both gay and straight, divided by the breakwater) are packed with sunbathers on lounges being served beers and mojitos by sexy Spaniards. As the sun goes down, the main stage (set right on the beach) comes alive and is a great place to meet up with those new friends you've made.

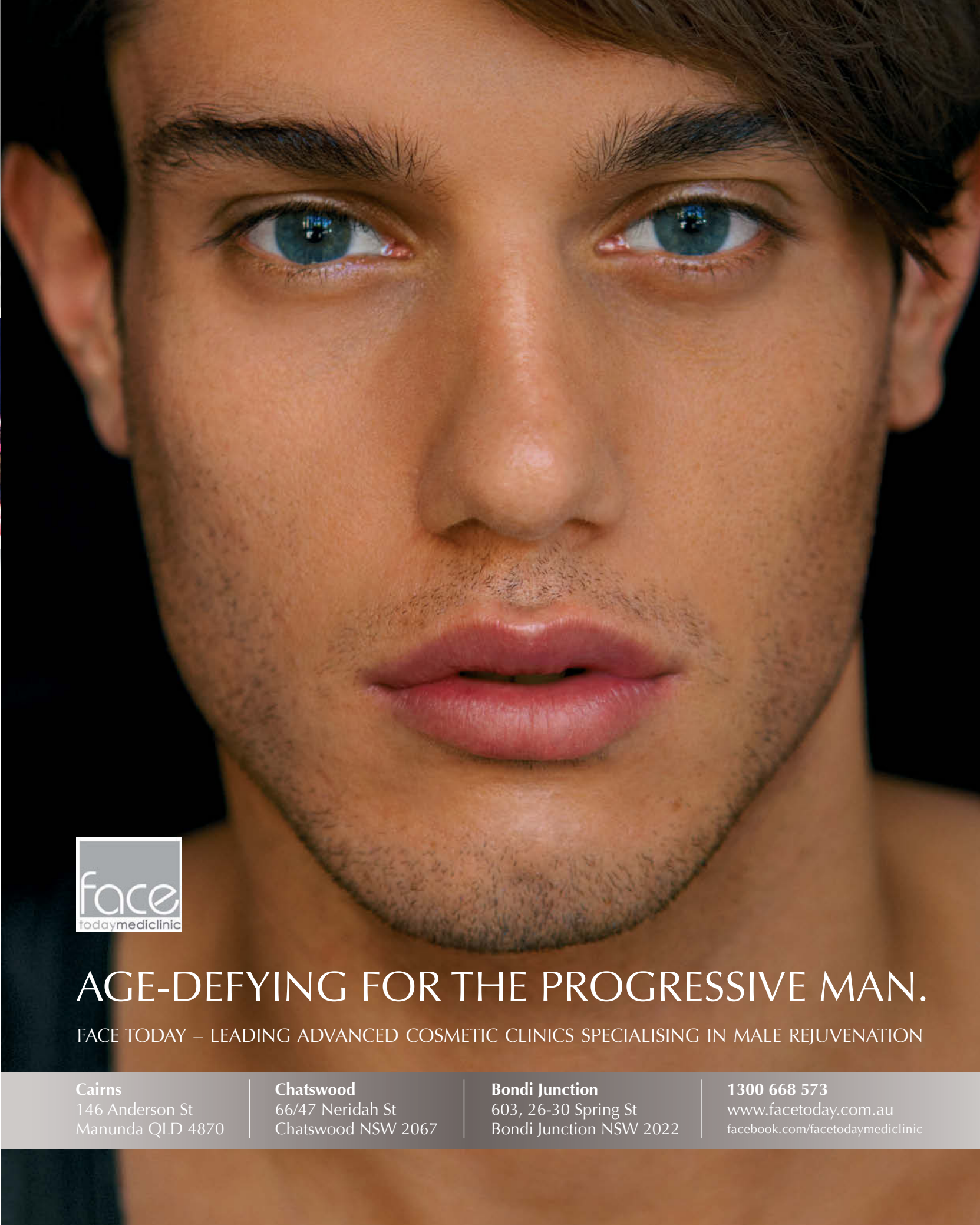
If you're looking for an escape to deliciously sexy men, sun, beach, parties and a damn good time then book your trip now for Sitges Pride!

MORE: *Visit www.gaysitgesguide.com*

Dates: June 16th-20th 2016
Getting there: Fly to Barcelona then cab to Sitges (€70, 25 minutes). Or pay just €3.80 on the frequent commuter train (45 minutes).
Accommodation: I suggest staying in the main town. There's a lot of accommodation facing the beach and parade route for a good perve.
Bars: Parrots Bar is the perfect spot for people-watching and a (strong) cocktail at the end (or beginning!) of each day.
Clubs: The main town is awash with clubs, all offering something slightly different, with most people hopping from one to another.
Sex: Bukkake is Sitges' busiest cruising bar right in the centre of town, along with the far end of the beach in the early hours of the morning. Hot boys are also busy handing out flyers for nighttime events along the beach all day.
Gym: A 20-minute walk out of town and over the train tracks is Piscina Municipal de Sitges offering a large variety of cardio, free weights and a pool to keep you looking good. Casual visits and 10 packs are available.

> "Glitter cannons will once again welcome the start of its booming festival."

Lady Diamond ruffles some feathers.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Model Casting

JOHN HOUGH'S PORTRAIT of model Anthony Sanchez recalls both the innocence of '50s physique photography and the sexy, colour-saturated style of French photo duo, Pierre et Gilles.

"I have a lot of different ideas going through my mind at any moment," says John. "Then, for no reason at all, you're working with a model and some idea pops into your mind and you go for it. Anthony is so easy to work with, and did a great job."

MORE: *Look for more from both John and Anthony on ModelMayhem.com*

#thecokethecockandthecop

It had all been going so well.
A product launch on a school night.
In my best new suit.
At the gym to support @hot_trainer's official release of his innovative new underwear brand PocJox.
And the place was teeming with underwear models.
In their underwear.
One of whom was taking a particular interest in me.
An interest that I, of course, fuelled.
With cocktails.
Organic-gluten-free-low-carb-high-protein-paleo-vegan snacks.
The suggestion of cocaine.
And the half-hearted promise of a bed for the night.
But such a lure was just to make my intentions clearly known.
And he had told me how far away he lived.
So it added extra appeal to my offer.
Sadly, we never made it to my place.
Although technically we did spend the night together.
We'd hatched a plan to leave the event separately, and meet in the alleyway around the corner.
The alleyway was even more dimly lit than usual, with one of the two overhead street lights being out.
And @vulnerable_underwear_model shivered in the darkness, for it was an unseasonably cool night for this time of year.
And his clothes were in his backpack.
For some reason I felt the best way for him to warm up was not, in fact, to get dressed.
But to stick his little finger in a bag of white powder and inhale that same white powder up his nose.
It did more than warm him up.
It hotted him up completely.
After an hour of sexual tension, and a copious quantity of cocktails, this was all he needed to take it to the next stage.
Before I knew it, I was engaged in a passionate embrace with a scantily clad and strapping youth, grinding my best suit up against a brick wall.
And not long after, the trousers from that very best suit were down around my ankles.
Only the jacket being subjected to the rigorous wear and tear of the exposed brick wall.
Not for long though, as @vulnerable_underwear_model, like my trousers, was also now closer to the ground.
And as I looked down and saw his bobbing head, I also saw a back covered in goosebumps.
So, chivalrous as ever, I covered it with my jacket.
And proceeded to lean back and ruin my shirt instead.
I'd like to say that it lasted for ages.
With the booze, the coke and the dark it was really difficult to gauge time.
And I was in fucking heaven.
Well, maybe not fucking heaven, but definitely sucking heaven.
But it had been a while, and I had been particularly stressed of late.
So it didn't take long for me to reach my goal.
And I did so with an almighty thrust.
Accompanied by much moaning, groaning and a final yell.
Which, upon reflection, may have been the thing that attracted the attention of the on-foot policeman one small block away.
Although, at that exact moment, I had my mind on other things.
Namely, the whole "now that I've come I really couldn't be bothered getting him off, but I suppose I should return the favour" conversation that was going on in my head.
I could have taken him home and finished him off there, giving myself the time to get back in the mood.

> **"I noticed nothing. Not the time. Not the thrusting. Nor the sound of the approaching policeman."**

Plus now that my own tension had been relieved, I was anxiously aware that we were, in fact, in a public space.
And that I had just ejaculated into the mouth of somebody only slightly older than half my age.
Who was wearing only underpants.
And combat boots.
So I was keen to wrap this up quickly.
And more privately.
But I was also fearful of the fact that if I got him home, then got him off, I'd be wanting him to be off, and he'd probably be inclined to stay the night, considering how late it would be, and how far he'd have to travel.
So, in an act of the most purely selfish unselfishness, I set about the business.
I shoved some coke up my nose.
(and a little in my mouth for good measure).
Pulled his undies to his ankles.
And dropped to my knees.
With one of my hands firmly clamped to each of his nipples.
In the hope that he'd be one of those men with a hotline straight from his nipples to his dick.
Which he was.
Not that it mattered.
I was totally high.
And my mouth was totally numb.
So I noticed nothing.
Not the time.
Not the thrusting.
Nor the sound of the approaching policeman.
Who made himself known with a tap on my shoulder.
Right the very second that @vulnerable_underwear_model came in my mouth.
He opened his eyes right as he did, and nearly died at the sight of the policeman before him.
"Oh fuck!" he cried.
And was given a warning for offensive language.
The policeman yanked me off my knees.
And asked me my name.
But I still had a mouth full of sperm.
And even in such situations my old fashioned sense of good manners dictated that I not speak with my mouth full.
Something this particular officer of the law did not understand.
He asked the question again, this time yelling.
And with a big gulp I swallowed the contents of my mouth.
And told him my name.
He asked me what we thought we'd been doing.
And I told him about the birds and the bees.
He then asked if I had any drugs on me.
To which I replied: "Sure, would you like some?"
(There are those good manners again).
Showing a policeman an almost full gram of coke, after he's just busted you sucking cock on a sidewalk is perhaps not the best idea.
Then swearing at the realisation of your stupidity is also not good.
Handcuffed.
Back of the paddy wagon.
Charged with multiple offences.
Indecent behaviour.
Engaging in a sexual act in a public place.
Possession of a prohibited substance.
Bribing a police officer.
Attempting to supply a prohibited substance.
To a police officer.
Offensive language.
To a police officer.
And in the end I did it all in vain, for due to our incarceration I really did spend the night with @vulnerable_underwear_model.

Famous Last Words

"GOODNIGHT MY DARLINGS, I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW."
– Noël Coward

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